Ex marmore antiquo in Æd Farnesianis Romæ

J. Phinn sculp

THE
ODYSSEY
OF
HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK,

BY

ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

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A GENERAL VIEW OF THE EPIC POEM, AND OF THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY.

EXTRACTED FROM *BOSSU.*

SECTION I.

THE fables of poets were originally employed in reprefenting the Divine Nature *, according to the notion then conceived of it. This fublime fubject occafioned the firft poets to be called divines, and poetry the language of the gods. They divided the divine attributes into fo many perfons; becaufe the infirmity of a human mind cannot fufficiently conceive, or explain, fo much power and action in a fimplicity fo great and indivifible as that of God. And perhaps they were alfo jealous of the advantages they reaped from fuch excellent and exalted learning, and of which they thought the vulgar part of mankind was not worthy.

THEY could not defcribe the operations of this almighty caufe, without fpeaking at the fame time of its effects: fo that to divinity they added phyfiology, and treated of both, without quitting the umbrages of their allegorical expreffions.

BUT man being the chief and the moft noble of all that God produced, and nothing being fo proper, or

* Of the nature of epic poetry.

more uſeful to poets than this ſubject; they added it to the former, and treated of the doctrine of morality after the ſame manner as they did that of divinity and philoſophy: and from morality, thus treated, is formed that kind of poem and fable which we call epic.

The poets did the ſame in morality, that the divines had done in divinity. But that infinite variety of the actions and operations of the divine nature, to which our underſtanding bears ſo ſmall a proportion, did, as it were, force them upon dividing the ſingle idea of the only one God into ſeveral perſons, under the different names of Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, and the reſt.

And on the other hand, the nature of moral philoſophy being ſuch, as never to treat of things in particular, but in general; the epic poets were obliged to unite in one ſingle idea, in one and the ſame perſon, and in an action which appeared ſingular, all that looked like it in different perſons, and in various actions; which might be thus contained as ſo many ſpecies under their genus.

The preſence of the deity, and the care ſuch an auguſt cauſe is to be ſuppoſed to take about any action, obliges the poet to repreſent this action as great, important, and managed by || kings and princes. It obliges him likewiſe to think and ſpeak in an elevated way above the vulgar, and in a ſtyle that may in ſome ſort keep up the character of the divine perſons he introduces. ‡ To this end ſerve the poetical and figurative expreſſion, and the majeſty of the heroic verſe.

But all this, being divine and ſurprizing, may quite ruin all probability: therefore the poet ſhould take a peculiar care as to that point, ſince his chief aim is to inſtruct, and without probability any action is leſs likely to perſuade.

|| *Res geſtae regumque ducumque.* Hor. Art. Poet.

‡ ——— *Cui mens divinior atque os*
Magna ſonaturum, des nominis hujus honorem, Horat.

LASTLY, ſince precepts ought to be † conciſe, to be the more eaſily conceived, and leſs oppreſs the memory; and ſince nothing can be more effectual to this end than propoſing one ſingle idea, and collecting all things ſo well together, as to be preſent to our minds all at once; therefore the poets have reduced all to one ‡ ſingle action, under one and the ſame deſign, and in a body whoſe members and parts ſhould be homogeneous.

WHAT we have obſerved of the nature of the epic poem, gives us a juſt idea of it, and we may define it thus:

"THE epic poem is a diſcourſe invented by art, to "form the manners, by ſuch inſtructions as are diſguiſ-"ed under the allegories of ſome one important action, "which is related in verſe, after a probable, diverting, "and ſurprizing manner."

SECTION II.

§ IN every deſign which a man deliberately undertakes, the end he propoſes is the firſt thing in his mind, and that by which he governs the whole work, and all its parts: thus ſince the end of the epic poem is to regulate the manners, it is with this firſt view the poet ought to begin.

BUT there is a great difference between the philoſophical and the poetical doctrine of manners. The ſchoolmen content themſelves with treating of virtues and vices in general: the inſtructions they give are proper for all ſtates, people, and for all ages. But the poet has a nearer regard to his own country, and the neceſſities of his own nation. With this deſign he makes choice of ſome piece of morality, the moſt proper and juſt he can imagine: and in order to preſs this home, he makes

† *Quicquid praecipies eſto brevis, ut cito dicta*
Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles. Hor. Poet.

‡ *Denique ſit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat, et unum.* Ibid.

§ The fable of the Iliad.

leſs uſe of the force of reaſoning, than of the power of inſinuation; accommodating himſelf to the particular cuſtoms and inclinations of thoſe, who are to be the ſubject, or the readers, of his work.

Let us now ſee how Homer has acquitted himſelf in theſe reſpects.

He ſaw the Grecians, for whom he deſigned his poem, were divided into as many ſtates as they had capital cities. Each was a body politic apart, and had its form of government independent from all the reſt. And yet theſe diſtinct ſtates were very often obliged to unite together in one body againſt their common enemies. Theſe were two very different ſorts of government, ſuch as could not be comprehended in one maxim of morality, and in one ſingle poem.

The poet therefore has made two diſtinct fables of them. The one is for Greece in general, united into one body, but compoſed of parts independent on each other; and the other for each particular ſtate, conſidered as they were in time of peace, without the former circumſtances and the neceſſity of being united.

As for the firſt ſort of government, in the union or rather in the confederacy of many independent ſtates; experience has always made it appear, "That nothing ſo "much cauſes ſucceſs as a due ſubordination, and a right "underſtanding among the chief commanders. And on "the other hand, the inevitable ruin of ſuch confedera-"cies proceeds from the heats, jealouſies and ambition "of the different leaders, and the diſcontents of ſubmit-"ting to a ſingle general." All ſorts of ſtates, and in particular the Grecians, had dearly experienced this truth. So that the moſt uſeful and neceſſary inſtruction that could be given them, was to lay before their eyes the loſs which both the people and the princes muſt of neceſſity ſuffer by the ambition, diſcord, and obſtinacy of the latter.

Homer then has taken for the foundation of his fable this great truth; that a miſunderſtanding between prin-

ces is the ruin of their own ſtates. "I ſing, ſays he, "the anger of Achilles, ſo pernicious to the Grecians, "and the cauſe of ſo many heroes deaths, occaſioned "by the diſcord and ſeparation of Agamemnon and that "prince."

But that this truth may be completely and fully known, there is need of a ſecond to ſupport it. It is neceſſary in ſuch a deſign, not only to repreſent the confederate ſtates at firſt diſagreeing among themſelves, and from thence unfortunate; but to ſhow the ſame ſtates afterwards reconciled and united, and of conſequence victorious.

Let us now ſee how he has joined all theſe in one general action.

"Several princes independent on one another were "united againſt a common enemy. The perſon, whom "they had elected their general, offers an affront to the "moſt valiant of all the confederates. This offended "prince is ſo far provoked, as to relinquiſh the union, "and obſtinately refuſed to fight for the common cauſe. "This miſunderſtanding gives the enemy ſuch an ad"vantage, that the allies are very near quitting their de"ſign with diſhonour. He himſelf, who made the ſepa"ration, is not exempt from ſharing the misfortune "which he brought upon his party. For having permit"ted his intimate friend to ſuccour them in a great ne"ceſſity, this friend is killed by the enemy's general. "Thus the contending princes, being both made wiſer "at their own coſt, are reconciled, and unite again: "then this valiant prince not only obtains the victory "in the public cauſe, but revenges his private wrongs "by killing with his own hands the author of the death "of his friend."

This is the firſt platform of the poem, and the fiction, which reduces into one important and univerſal action all the particulars upon which it turns.

In the next place, it muſt be rendered probable by the circumſtances of times, places and perſons; ſome

perſons muſt be found out, already known by hiſtory or otherwiſe, whom we may with probability make the actors and perſonages of this fable. Homer has made choice of the ſiege of Troy, and feigned that this action happened there. To a phantom of his brain, whom he would paint valiant and choloric, he has given the name of Achilles; that of Agamemnon to his general; that of Hector to the enemy's commander, and ſo to the reſt.

BESIDES, he was obliged to accommodate himſelf to the manners, cuſtoms, and genius of the Greeks his auditors, the better to make them attend to the inſtruction of his poem; and to gain their approbation by praiſing them: ſo that they might the better forgive him the repreſentation of their own faults in ſome of his chief perſonages. He admirably diſcharges all theſe duties, by making theſe brave princes and thoſe victorious people all Grecians, and the fathers of thoſe he had a mind to commend.

BUT not being content, in a work of ſuch a length, to propoſe only the principal point of the moral, and to fill up the reſt with uſeleſs ornaments and foreign incidents, he extends this moral by all its neceſſary conſequences. As for inſtance in the ſubject before us, it is not enough to know, that a good underſtanding ought always to be maintained among confederates: it is likewiſe of equal importance, that if there happens any diviſion, care muſt be taken to keep it ſecret from the enemy, that their ignorance of this advantage may prevent their making uſe of it. And in the ſecond place, when their concord is but counterfeit and only in appearance, one ſhould never preſs the enemy too cloſely; for this would diſcover the weakneſs which we ought to conceal from them.

THE epiſode of Patroclus moſt admirably furniſhes us with theſe two inſtructions. For when he appeared in the arms of Achilles, the Trojans, who took him for that prince now reconciled and united to the confederates, immediately gave ground, and quitted the advan-

tages they had before over the Greeks. But Patroclus, who ſhould have been contented with this ſucceſs, preſſes upon Hector too boldly, and by obliging him to fight, ſoon diſcovers that it was not the true Achilles who was clad in his armour, but a hero of much inferior proweſs. So that Hector kills him, and regains thoſe advantages which the Trojans had loſt, on the opinion that Achilles was reconciled.

SECTION III.

‡ THE Odyſſey was not deſigned, like the Iliad, for the inſtruction of all the ſtates of Greece joined in one body, but for each ſtate in particular. As a ſtate is compoſed of two parts; the head which commands, and the members which obey; there are inſtructions requiſite to both, to teach the one to govern, and the others to ſubmit to government.

THERE are two virtues neceſſary to one in authority, prudence to order, and care to ſee his orders put in execution. The prudence of a politician is not acquired but by a long experience in all ſorts of buſineſs, and by an acquaintance with all the different forms of governments and ſtates. The care of the adminiſtration ſuffers not him that has the government to rely upon others, but requires his own preſence: and kings, who are abſent from their ſtates, are in danger of loſing them, and give occaſion to great diſorders and confuſion.

THESE two points may be eaſily united in one and the ſame man. "A king forſakes his kingdom to viſit "the courts of ſeveral princes, where he learns the "manners and cuſtoms of different nations. From "hence there naturally ariſes a vaſt number of incidents, "of dangers, and of adventures, very uſeful for a political inſtitution. On the other ſide, this abſence gives "way to the diſorders which happen in his own kingdom, and which end not till his return, whoſe pre-

‡ The fable of the Odyſſey.

" ſence only can re-eſtabliſh all things." Thus the abſence of a king has the ſame effects in this fable, as the diviſion of the princes had in the former.

THE ſubjects have ſcarce any need but of one general maxim, which is, to ſuffer themſelves to be governed, and to obey faithfully; whatever reaſon they may imagine againſt the orders they received. It is eaſy to join this inſtruction with the other, by beſtowing on this wiſe and induſtrious prince ſuch ſubjects, as in his abſence would rather follow their own judgment than his commands; and by demonſtrating the misfortunes which this diſobedience draws upon them, the evil conſequences which almoſt infallibly attend theſe particular notions, which are intirely different from the general idea of him who ought to govern.

BUT as it was neceſſary that the princes in the Iliad ſhould be choleric and quarrelſome, ſo it is neceſſary in the fable of the Odyſſey that the chief perſon ſhould be ſage and prudent. This raiſes a difficulty in the fiction; becauſe this perſon ought to be abſent for the two reaſons afore-mentioned, which are eſſential to the fable, and which conſtitute the principal aim of it: but he cannot abſent himſelf, without offending againſt another maxim of equal importance, *viz.* that a king ſhould upon no account leave his country.

IT is true, there are ſometimes ſuch neceſſities as ſufficiently excuſe the prudence of a politician in this point. But ſuch a neceſſity is a thing important enough of itſelf to ſupply matter for another poem, and this multiplication of the action would be vicious. To prevent which in the firſt place, this neceſſity and the departure of the hero muſt be disjoined from the poem; and in the ſecond place, the hero having been obliged to abſent himſelf, for a reaſon antecedent to the action and placed diſtinct from the fable, he ought not ſo far to embrace this opportunity of inſtructing himſelf, as to abſent himſelf voluntarily from his own government. For at this rate, his abſence would be merely voluntary

and one might with reaſon lay to his charge all the diſorders which might ariſe.

THUS in the conſtitution of the fable, he ought not to take for his action, and for the foundation of his poem, the departure of a prince from his own country, nor his voluntary ſtay in any other place; but his return, and this return retarded againſt his will. This is the firſt idea Homer gives us of it. ‡ His hero appears at firſt in a deſolate iſland, ſitting upon the ſide of the ſea, which with tears in his eyes he looks upon as the obſtacle that had ſo long oppoſed his return, and detained him from reviſiting his own dear country.

AND laſtly, ſince this forced delay might more naturally and uſually happen to ſuch as make voyages by ſea; Homer has judiciouſly made choice of a prince whoſe kingdom was in an iſland.

LET us ſee then how he has feigned all this action, making his hero a perſon in years, becauſe years are requiſite to inſtruct a man in prudence and policy.

"A PRINCE had been obliged to forſake his native "country, and to head an army of his ſubjects in a fo- "reign expedition. Having glorioufly performed this "enterprize, he was marching home again, and condu- "cting his ſubjects to his own ſtate. But ſpite of all the "attempts, with which his eagerneſs to return had in- "ſpired him, he was ſtopped by the way by tempeſts "for ſeveral years, and caſt upon ſeveral countries dif- "fering from each other in manners and government. "In theſe dangers his companions, not always follow- "ing his orders, periſhed through their own fault. The "grandees of his country ſtrangely abuſe his abſence, "and raiſe no ſmall diſorders at home. They conſume "his eſtate, conſpire to deſtroy his ſon, would con- "ſtrain his queen to accept of one of them for her hus- "band; and indulge themſelves in all violence, ſo much "the more, becauſe they were perſuaded he would never "return. But at laſt he returns, and diſcovering himſelf

‡ Odyſſey 5.

" only to his son and some others, who had continued " firm to him, he is an eye-witness of the insolence of " his enemies, punishes them according to their deserts, " and restores to his island that tranquillity and repose " to which they had been strangers during his absence."

As the truth which serves for foundation to this fiction is, that the absence of a person from his own home, or his neglect of his own affairs, is the cause of great disorders: so the principal point of the action, and the most essential one, is the absence of the hero. This fills almost all the poem: for not only this real absence lasted several years, but even when the hero returned, he does not discover himself; and this prudent disguise, from whence he reaped so much advantage, has the same effect upon the authors of the disorders, and all others who knew him not, as his real absence had before, so that he is absent as to them, till the very moment of their punishment.

After the poet had thus composed his fable, and joined the fiction to the truth, he then makes choice of Ulysses the king of the isle of Ithaca, to maintain the character of his chief personage, and bestowed the rest upon Telemachus, Penelope, Antinous, and others, whom he calls by what names he pleases.

I shall not here insist upon the many excellent advices, which are so many parts, and natural consequences of the fundamental truth; and which the poet very dexterously lays down in those fictions, which are the episodes and members of the entire action. Such for instance are these advices: not to intrude one's self into the mysteries of government, which the prince keeps secret: this is represented to us by the winds shut up in a bull-hide, which the miserable companions of Ulysses would needs be so foolish as to pry into. Not to suffer one's self to be led away by the seeming charms of an idle and inactive life, to which the Sirens Song invited*. Not to suffer one's self to be sensualized by pleasures,

* *Improba Siren desidia.* Horat.

ſures, like thoſe who were changed into brutes by Circe: and a great many other points of morality neceſſary for all ſorts of people.

This poem is more uſeful to the people than the Iliad, where the ſubjects ſuffer rather by the ill conduct of their princes, than through their own miſcarriages. But in the Odyſſey, it is not the fault of Ulyſſes that is the ruin of his ſubjects. This wiſe prince leaves untried no method to make them partakers of the benefit of his return. Thus the poet in the Iliad ſays, "He ſings "the anger of Achilles, which had cauſed the death of "ſo many Grecians;" and on the contrary, in the ‡ Odyſſey he tells his readers, "That the ſubjects periſhed "through their own fault."

SECTION IV.

§ ARISTOTLE beſtows great encomiums upon Homer for the ſimplicity of his deſign, becauſe he has included in one ſingle part all that happened at the ſiege of Troy. And to this he oppoſes the ignorance of ſome poets who imagined that the unity of the fable or action was ſufficiently preſerved by the unity of the hero; and who compoſed their Theſeids, Heracleids, and the like, wherein they only heaped up in one poem every thing that happened to one perſonage.

He finds fault with thoſe poets who were for reducing the unity of the fable into the unity of the hero, becauſe one man may have performed ſeveral adventures, which it is impoſſible to reduce under any one and ſimple head. This reducing of all things to unity and ſimplicity is what Horace likewiſe makes his firſt rule.

Denique ſit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat, et unum.

According to theſe rules, it will be allowable to make uſe of ſeveral fables; or to ſpeak more correctly,

‡ Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο, Odyſſ. 1.

§ Of the unity of the fable.

of several incidents which may be divided into several fables; provided they are so ordered, that the unity of the fable be not spoiled. This liberty is still greater in the epic poem, because it is of a larger extent, and ought to be entire and complete.

I WILL explain myself more distinctly by the practice of Homer.

No doubt but one might make four distinct fables out of these four following instructions.

1. *Division between those of the same party exposes them entirely to their enemies.*

2. *Conceal your weakness, and you will be dreaded as much, as if you had none of these imperfections, of which they are ignorant.*

3. *When your strength is only feigned, and founded only in the opinion of others; never venture so far as if your strength was real.*

4. *The more you agree together, the less hurt can your enemies do you.*

IT is plain, I say, that each of these particular maxims might serve for the ground-work of a fiction, and one might make four distinct fables out of them. May one not then put all these into one single Epopea? not unless one single fable can be made out of all. The poet indeed may have so much skill as to unite all into one body, as members and parts, each of which taken asunder would be imperfect; and if he joins them so, as that this conjunction shall be no hinderance at all to the unity and the regular simplicity of the fable. This is what Homer has done with such success in the composition of the Iliad.

1. *The division between Achilles and his allies tended t[o] the ruin of their designs.* 2. *Patroclus comes to their re[-] lief in the armour of this hero, and Hector retreats.* 3. *Bu[t] this young man pushing the advantage, which his disgui[se] gave him, too far, ventures to engage with Hector himsel[f] but not being master of Achilles's strength, whom he on[ly]*

represented in outward appearance, he is killed, and by this means leaves the Grecian affairs in the same disorder, from which in that disguise he came to free them. 4. *Achilles, provoked at the death of his friend, is reconciled, and revenges his loss by the death of Hector.* These various incidents being thus united, do not make different actions and fables, but are only the uncomplete and unfinished parts of one and the same action and fable, which alone can be said to be complete and entire: and all these maxims of the moral, are easily reduced into these two parts, which in my opinion cannot be separated without enervating the force of both. The two parts are these, ‡ that a right understanding is the preservation, and discord the destruction of states.

THOUGH then the poet has made use of two parts in his poems, each of which might have served for a fable, as we have observed; yet this multiplication cannot be called a vicious and irregular Polymythia, contrary to the necessary unity and simplicity of the fable; but it gives the fable another qualification, altogether necessary and regular, namely its perfection and finishing stroke.

SECTION V.

‖ THE action of a poem is the subject which the poet undertakes, proposes, and builds upon. So that the moral and the instructions which are the end of the epic poem are not the matter of it. Those the poets leave in their allegorical and figurative obscurity. They only give notice at the exordium, that they sing some action. *The Revenge of Achilles, the Return of Ulysses*, etc.

SINCE then the action is the matter of a fable, it is evident that whatever incidents are essential to the fable, or constitute a part of it, are necessary also to the action, and are parts of the epic matter, none of which ought to be omitted. Such, for instance, are the con-

‡ *Concordia res parvae crescunt: discordia magnae dilabuntur.* Sallust. de bello Jug.

‖ Of the action of the epic poem.

tention of Agamemnon and Achilles, the slaughter Hector makes in the Grecian army, the re-union of the Greek princes; and lastly, the resettlement and victory which was the consequence of that re-union.

There are four qualifications in the epic action: the first is its unity, the second its integrity, the third its importance, the fourth its duration.

The unity of the epic action, as well as the unity of the fable, does not consist either in the unity of the hero, or in the unity of time: three things I suppose are necessary to it. The first is, to make use of no episode but what arises from the very platform and foundation of the action, and is as it were a natural member of the body. The second is, exactly to unite these episodes and these members with one another. And the third is, never to finish any episode so as it may seem to be an entire action; but to let each episode still appear in its own particular nature, as the member of a body, and as a part of itself not complete.

* Aristotle not only says that the epic action should be one, but adds, that it should be entire, perfect, and complete, and for this purpose ought to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. These three parts of a whole are too generally and universally denoted by the words, beginning, middle and end; we may interpret them more precisely, and say, that the causes and designs of an action are the beginning: that the effects of these causes, and the difficulties that are met with in the execution of these designs, are the middle; and that the unravelling and resolution of these difficulties are the end.

‡ Homer's design in the Iliad is to relate the anger and revenge of Achilles. The beginning of this action is the change of Achilles from a calm to a passionate temper. The middle is the effects of his passion, and all the illustrious deaths it is the cause of. The end of this

* Of the beginning, middle, and end of the action.

‡ The action of the Iliad.

ſame action is the return of Achilles to his calmneſs of temper again. All was quiet in the Grecian camp, when Agamemnon their general provokes Apollo againſt them, whom he was willing to appeaſe afterwards at the coſt and prejudice of Achilles, who had no part in his fault. This then is an exact beginning: it ſuppoſes nothing before, and requires after it the effects of this anger. Achilles revenges himſelf, and that is an exact middle; it ſuppoſes before it the anger of Achilles, this revenge is the effect of it. Then this middle requires after it the effects of this revenge, which is the ſatisfaction of Achilles: for the revenge had not been complete, unleſs Achilles had been ſatisfied. By this means the poet makes his hero, after he was glutted by the miſchief he had done to Agamemnon, by the death of Hector, and the honour he did his friend, by inſulting over his murderer; he makes him, I ſay, to be moved by the tears and misfortunes of king Priam. We ſee him as calm at the end of the poem, during the funeral of Hector, as he was at the beginning of the poem, whilſt the plague raged among the Grecians. This end is juſt, ſince the calmneſs of temper Achilles re-enjoyed, is only an effect of the revenge which ought to have preceded: and after this no body expects any more of his anger. Thus has Homer been very exact in the beginning, middle and end of the action he made choice of for the ſubject of his Iliad.

* His deſign in the Odyſſey was to deſcribe the return of Ulyſſes from the ſiege of Troy, and his arrival at Ithaca. He opens this poem with the complaints of Minerva againſt Neptune, who oppoſed the return of this hero, and againſt Calypſo who detained him in an iſland from Ithaca. Is this a beginning? no; doubtleſs, the reader would know why Neptune is diſpleaſed with Ulyſſes, and how this prince came to be with Calypſo: he would know how he came from Troy thither: the poet anſwers his demands out of the mouth of Ulyſſes

* The action of the Odyſſey.

himſelf, who relates theſe things, and begins the action by the recital of his travels from the city of Troy. It ſignifies little whether the beginning of the action be the beginning of the poem. The beginning of this action is that which happens to Ulyſſes, when upon his leaving Troy he bends his courſe for Ithaca. The middle comprehends all the misfortunes he endured, and all the diſorders of his own government. The end is the re-inſtating of this hero in the peaceable poſſeſſion of his kingdom, where he was acknowleged by his ſon, his wife, his father, and ſeveral others. The poet was ſenſible he ſhould have ended ill had he gone no farther than the death of theſe princes, who were the rivals and enemies of Ulyſſes, becauſe the reader might have looked for ſome revenge, which the ſubjects of theſe princes might have taken, on him who had killed their ſovereigns: but this danger over, and the people vanquiſhed and quieted, there was nothing more to be expected. The poem and the action have all their parts, and no more.

But the order of the Odyſſey differs from that of the Iliad, in that the poem does not begin with the beginning of the action.

* The cauſes of the action are alſo what the poet is obliged to give an account of. There are three ſorts of cauſes, the humours, the intereſts, and the deſigns of men; and theſe different cauſes of an action are likewiſe often the cauſes of one another, every man taking up thoſe intereſts in which his humour ingages him, and forming thoſe deſigns to which his humour and intereſt incline him. Of all theſe the poet ought to inform his readers, and render them conſpicuous in his principal perſonages.

Homer has ingeniouſly begun his Odyſſey with the tranſactions at Ithaca, during the abſence of Ulyſſes. If he had begun with the travels of his hero, he would ſcarce have ſpoken of any one elſe, and a man might have read a great deal of the poem, without conceiving

* Of the cauſes and beginning of the action.

the leaſt idea of Telemachus, Penelope, or her ſuitors, who had ſo great a ſhare in the action; but in the beginning he has pitched upon, beſides theſe perſonages, whom he diſcovers, he repreſents Ulyſſes in his full length, and from the very firſt opening one ſees the intereſt which the gods take in the action.

The ſkill and care of the ſame poet may be ſeen likewiſe in inducing his perſonages in the firſt book of his Iliad, where he diſcovers the humours, the intereſts, and the deſigns of Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, Ulyſſes, and ſeveral others, and even of the deities. And in his ſecond he makes a review of the Grecian and Trojan armies; which is full evidence, that all we have here ſaid is very neceſſary.

‡ As theſe cauſes are the beginning of the action, the oppoſite deſigns againſt that of the hero are the middle of it, and form that difficulty or intrigue, which makes up the greateſt part of the poem; the ſolution or unravelling commences when the reader begins to ſee that difficulty removed, and the doubts cleared up. Homer has divided each of his poems into two parts, and has put a particular intrigue, and the ſolution of it, into each part.

The firſt part of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles, who is for revenging himſelf upon Agamemnon by the means of Hector and the Trojans. The intrigue comprehends the three days fight, which happened in the abſence of Achilles: and it conſiſts on one ſide in the reſiſtance of Agamemnon and the Grecians: and on the other in the revengeful and inexorable humour of Achilles, which would not ſuffer him to be reconciled. The loſs of the Grecians, and the deſpair of Agamemnon, prepare for a ſolution by the ſatisfaction which the incenſed hero received from it. The death of Patroclus joined to the offers of Agamemnon, which of itſelf had proved ineffectual, remove this difficulty, and make the unravelling of the firſt part.

‡ Of the middle or intrigue of the action.

THIS death is likewise the beginning of the second part; since it puts Achilles upon the design of revenging himself on Hector. But the design of Hector is opposite to that of Achilles; this Trojan is valiant, and resolved to stand on his own defence. This valour and resolution of Hector, are on his part the cause of the intrigue. All the endeavours Achilles used to meet with Hector, and be the death of him; and the contrary endeavours of the Trojan to keep out of his reach, and defend himself, are the intrigue; which comprehends the battle of the last day. The unravelling begins at the death of Hector; and besides that, it contains the insulting of Achilles over his body, the honours he paid to Patroclus, and the intreaties of king Priam. The regrets of this king and the other Trojans, in the sorrowful obsequies they paid to Hector's body, end the unravelling; they justify the satisfaction of Achilles, and demonstrate his tranquillity.

THE first part of the Odyssey is the return of Ulysses into Ithaca. Neptune opposes it by raising tempests, and this makes the intrigue. The unravelling is the arrival of Ulysses upon his own island, where Neptune could offer him no farther injury. The second part is the re-instating this heroe in his own government. The princes that are his rivals, oppose him, and this is a fresh intrigue: the solution of it begins at their deaths, and is completed as soon as the Ithacans were appeased.

These two parts in the Odyssey have not one common intrigue. The anger of Achilles forms both the intrigues in the Iliad; and it is so far the matter of this Epopea, that the very beginning and end of this poem depend on the beginning and end of this anger. But let the desire Achilles had to revenge himself, and the desire Ulysses had to return to his own country, be never so near allied, yet we cannot place them under one and the same notion: for that desire of Ulysses is not a passion that begins and ends in the poem with the

action: it is a natural habit: nor does the poet propose it for his subject as he does the anger of Achilles.

We have already observed what is meant by the intrigue, and the unravelling thereof; let us now say something of the manner of forming both. These two should arise naturally out of the very essence and subject of the poem, and are to be deduced from thence. Their conduct is so exact and natural, that it seems as if their action had presented them with whatever they inserted, without putting themselves to the trouble of a farther inquiry.

What is more usual and natural to warriors, than anger, heat, passion, and impatience of bearing the least affront or disrespect? This is what forms the intrigue of the Iliad; and every thing we read there is nothing else but the effect of this humour and these passions.

What more natural and usual obstacle to those who take voyages, than the sea, the winds, and the storms? Homer makes this the intrigue of the first part of the Odyssey: and for the second, he makes use of almost the infallible effect of the long absence of a master, whose return is quite despaired of, viz. the insolence of his servants and neighbours, the danger of his son and wife, and the sequestration of his estate. Besides an absence of almost twenty years, and the insupportable fatigues joined to the age of which Ulysses than was, might induce him to believe that he should not be owned by those who thought him dead, and whose interest it was to have him really so. Therefore if he had presently declared who he was, and had called himself Ulysses, they would easily have destroyed him as an impostor, before he had an opportunity to make himself known.

There could be nothing more natural nor more necessary than this ingenious disguise, to which the advantages his enemies had taken of his absence had reduced him, and to which his long misfortunes had inured him. This allowed him an opportunity, without

hazarding any thing, of taking the best measures he could, against those persons who could not so much as mistrust any harm from him. This way was afforded him by the very nature of his action, to execute his designs, and overcome the obstacles it cast before him. And it is this contest between the prudence and the dissimulation of a single man on one hand, and the ungovernable insolence of so many rivals on the other, which constitutes the intrigue of the second part of the Odyssey.

* If the plot or intrigue must be natural, and such as springs from the very subject, as has been already urged; then the winding up of the plot, by a more sure claim, must have this qualification, and be a probable consequence of all that went before. As this is what the readers regard more than the rest, so should the poet be more exact in it. This is the end of the poem, and the last impression that is to be stamped upon them.

We shall find this in the Odyssey. Ulysses, by a tempest, is cast upon the island of the Phaeacians, to whom he discovers himself, and desires they would favour his return to his own country, which was not very far distant. One cannot see any reason why the king of this island should refuse such a reasonable request, to a hero whom he seemed to have in great esteem. The Phaeacians indeed had heard him tell the story of his adventures; and in this fabulous recital consisted all the advantage that could derive from his presence; for the art of war which they admired in him, his undauntedness under dangers, his indefatigable patience, and other virtues, were such as these islanders were not used to. All their talent lay in singing and dancing, and whatsoever was charming in a quiet life. And here we see how dextrously Homer prepares the incidents he makes use of. These people could do no less, for the account with which Ulysses had so much entertained them, than afford him a ship and a safe

* Of the end or unravelling of the action.

convoy, which was of little expence, or trouble to them.

When he arrived, his long abſence, and the travels which had disfigured him, made him altogether unknown; and the danger he would have incurred, had he diſcovered himſelf too ſoon, forced him to a diſguiſe: laſtly, this diſguiſe gave him an opportunity of ſurprizing thoſe young ſuitors, who, for ſeveral years together, had been accuſtomed to nothing but to ſleep well, and fare daintily.

It was from theſe examples that Ariſtotle drew this rule, "that whatever concludes the poem ſhould ſo "ſpring from the very conſtitution of the fable, as if "it were a neceſſary, or at leaſt a probable conſequence.

SECTION VI.

* THE time of the epic action is not fixed, like that of the dramatic poem: it is much longer; for an uninterrupted duration is much more neceſſary in an action which one ſees and is preſent at, than in one which we only read or hear repeated. Beſides, tragedy is fuller of paſſion, and conſequently of ſuch a violence as cannot admit of ſo long a duration.

The Iliad containing an action of anger and violence, the poet allows it but a ſhort time, about forty days. The deſign of the Odyſſey required another conduct; the character of the hero is prudence and long-ſuffering; therefore the time of its duration is much longer, above eight years.

† The paſſions of tragedy are different from thoſe of the epic poem. In the former, Terror and Pity have the chief place; the paſſion that ſeems moſt peculiar to epic poetry, is Admiration.

Beſides this Admiration, which in general diſtinguiſhes

* The time of the action.

† The paſſions of the epic poem.

the epic poem from the dramatic; each epic poem has likewiſe ſome peculiar paſſion, which diſtinguiſhes it in particular from other epic poems, and conſtitutes a kind of ſingular and individual difference between theſe poems of the ſame ſpecies. Theſe ſingular paſſions correſpond to the character of the hero. Anger and Terror reign throughout the Iliad, becauſe Achilles is angry, and the moſt terrible of all men. The Æneid has all ſoft and tender paſſions, becauſe that is the character of Æneas. The prudence, wiſdom, and conſtancy of Ulyſſes do not allow him either of theſe extremes, therefore the poet does not permit one of them to be predominant in the Odyſſey. He confines himſelf to Admiration only, which he carries to an higher pitch than in the Iliad: and it is upon this account that he introduces a great many more machines in the Odyſſey into the body of the action, than are to be ſeen in the actions of the other two poems.

* The manners of the epic poem ought to be poetically good, but it is not neceſſary they be always morally ſo. They are poetically good, when one may diſcover the virtue or vice, the good or ill inclinations, of every one who ſpeaks or acts: they are poetically bad, when perſons are made to ſpeak or act out of character, or inconſiſtently, or unequally. The manners of Æneas and of Mezentius are equally good, conſidered poetically, becauſe they equally demonſtrate the piety of the one, and the impiety of the other.

† It is requiſite to make the ſame diſtinction between a hero in morality and a hero in poetry, as between moral and poetical goodneſs. Achilles had as much right to the latter as Æneas. Ariſtotle ſays, that the hero of a poem ſhould be neither good nor bad; neither advanced above the reſt of mankind by his virtues, or ſink beneath them by his vices; that he may be the proper

* The manners. † Character of the hero.

proper and fuller example to others, both what to imitate and what to decline.

The other qualifications of the manners, are, that they be ſuitable to the cauſes which either raiſe or diſcover them in the perſons; that they have an exact reſemblance to what hiſtory or fable have delivered of thoſe perſons to whom they are aſcribed; and that there be an equality in them, ſo that no man is made to act or ſpeak out of his character.

† But this equality is not ſufficient for the unity of the character; it its further neceſſary that the ſame ſpirit appear in all ſort of encounters. Thus Æneas acting with great piety and mildneſs in the firſt part of the Æneid, which requires no other character; and afterwards appearing illuſtrious in heroic valour in the wars of the ſecond part, but there, without any appearance either of a hard or a ſoft diſpoſition, would doubtleſs be far from offending againſt the equality of the manners: but yet there would be no ſimplicity or unity in the character. So that beſides the qualities that claim their particular place upon different occaſions, there muſt be one appearing throughout, which commands over all the reſt; and without this we may affirm it is no character.

One may indeed make a hero as valiant as Achilles, as pious as Æneas, and as prudent as Ulyſſes. But it is a mere chimera to imagine a hero, that has the valour of Achilles, the piety of Æneas, and the prudence of Ulyſſes, at one and the ſame time. This viſion might happen to an author, who would ſuit the character of a hero to whatever each part of the action might naturally require, without regarding the eſſence of the fable, or the unity of the character in the ſame perſon upon all ſorts of occaſions: this hero would be the mildeſt, beſt-natured prince in the world, and alſo the moſt choleric, hard-hearted, and implacable crea-

† Unity of the character.

ture imaginable; he would be extremely tender, like Æneas; extremely violent, like Achilles; and yet have the indifference of Ulyſſes, that is incapable of the two extremes. Would it not be in vain for the poet to call this perſon by the ſame name throughout?

Let us reflect on the effects it would produce in ſeveral poems, whoſe authors were of opinion, that the chief character of a hero is that of an accompliſhed man. They would be all alike, all valiant in battle, prudent in council, pious in the acts of religion, courteous, civil, magnificent; and laſtly, endued with all the prodigious virtues any poet could invent. All this would be independent from the action and the ſubject of the poem; and upon ſeeing each hero ſeparated from the reſt of the work, we ſhould not eaſily gueſs, to what action and to what poem the hero belonged. So that we ſhould ſee that none of thoſe would have a character, ſince the character is that which makes a perſon diſcernible, and which diſtinguiſhes him from all others.

This commanding quality in Achilles is his anger, in Ulyſſes the art of diſſimulation, in Æneas meekneſs. Each of theſe may be ſtiled, by way of eminence, the character of theſe heroes.

But theſe characters cannot be alone. It is abſolutely neceſſary that ſome other ſhould give them a luſtre, and embelliſh them as far as they are capable: either by hiding the defects that are in each, by ſome noble and ſhining qualities; as the poet has done the anger of Achilles, by ſhading it with extraordinary valour: or by making them entirely of the nature of a true and ſolid virtue, as is to be obſerved in the two others. The diſſimulation of Ulyſſes is a part of his prudence; and the meekneſs of Æneas is wholly employed in ſubmitting his will to the gods. For the making up this union, our poets have joined together ſuch qualities as are by nature the moſt compatible; Valour with Anger, Meekneſs with Piety, and Prudence with Diſſimulation. This laſt union was neceſ-

ſary for the goodneſs of Ulyſſes; for without that, his diſſimulation might have degenerated into wickedneſs and double-dealing.

SECT. VII.

* WE come now to the machines of the epic poem. The chief paſſion which it aims to excite being Admiration, nothing is ſo conducive to that as the Marvellous; and the importance and dignity of the action is by nothing ſo greatly elevated as by the care and interpoſition of heaven.

These machines are of three ſorts. Some are theological, and were invented to explain the nature of God. Others are phyſical, and repreſent things of nature. The laſt are moral, and are the images of virtues and vices.

Homer and the antients have given to their deities the manners, paſſions, and vices of men. Their poems are wholly allegorical; and in this view it is eaſier to defend Homer than to blame him. We cannot accuſe him for making mention of many gods, for his beſtowing paſſions upon them, or even introducing them fighting againſt men. The ſcripture uſes the like figures and expreſſions.

If it be allowable to ſpeak thus of the gods in theology, much more in the fictions of natural philoſophy, where, if a poet deſcribes the deities, he muſt give them ſuch manners, ſpeeches, and actions as are conformable to the nature of the things they repreſent under thoſe divinities. The caſe is the ſame in moral deities: Minerva is wiſe becauſe ſhe repreſents prudence; Venus is both good or bad, becauſe the paſſion of love is capable of theſe contrary qualities.

Since among the gods of a poem ſome are good, ſome bad, and ſome indifferently either; and ſince of our paſſions we make ſo many allegorical deities; one may attribute to the gods all that is done in the poem,

* Of the machinery.

whether good or evil. But theſe deities do not act conſtantly in one and the ſame manner.

Sometimes they act inviſibly, and by mere inſpiration; which has nothing in it extraordinary or miraculous; being no more than what we ſay every day, "that ſome god has aſſiſted us, or ſome daemon has "inſtigated us.

At other times they appear viſibly, and manifeſt themſelves to men, in a manner altogether miraculous and praeternatural.

The third way has ſomething of both the others; it is in truth a miracle, but is not commonly ſo accounted: this includes dreams, oracles, etc.

All theſe ways muſt be probable; for ſo neceſſary as the marvellous is to the epic action, as nothing is ſo conducive to admiration; yet we can, on the other hand, admire nothing that we think impoſſible. Though the probability of theſe machines be of a very large extent, (ſince it is founded upon divine power) it is not without limitations. There are numerous inſtances of allowable and probable machines in the epic poems, where the gods are no leſs actors than the men. But the leſs credible ſort, ſuch as Metamorphoſes, etc. are far more rare.

This ſuggeſts a reflection on the method of rendering thoſe machines probable, which in their own nature are hardly ſo. Thoſe, which require only divine probability, ſhould be ſo diſengaged from the action, that one might ſubſtract them from it without deſtroying the action. But thoſe, which are eſſential and neceſſary, ſhould be grounded upon human probability, and not on the ſole power of God. Thus the Epiſodes of Circe, the Syrens, Polyphemus, etc. are neceſſary to the action of the Odyſſey, and yet not humanly probable: yet Homer has artificially reduced them to human probability, by the ſimplicity and ignorance of the Phaeacians, before whom he cauſes thoſe recitals to be made.

The next queſtion is, where, and on what occaſions

machines may be uſed? It is certain Homer and Virgil made uſe of them every where, and ſcarce ſuffer any action to be performed without them. Petronius make this a precept: *Per ambages, deorumque miniſteria*, etc. The gods are mentioned in the very propoſition of their works, the invocation is addreſſed to them, and the whole narration is full of them. The gods are the cauſes of the action, they form the intrigue, and bring about the ſolution. The precept of Ariſtotle and Horace, that the unravelling of the plot ſhould not proceed from a miracle or the appearance of a god, has place only in dramatic poetry, not in the epic. For it is plain, that both in the ſolution of the Iliad and Odyſſey the gods are concerned: in the former, the deities meet to appeaſe the anger of Achilles: Iris and Mercury are ſent to that purpoſe, and Minerva eminently aſſiſts Achilles in the deciſive combat with Hector. In the Odyſſey, the ſame goodeſs fights cloſe by Ulyſſes againſt the ſuitors, and concludes that peace betwixt him and the Ithacenſians, which compleats the poem.

We may therefore determine, that a machine is not an invention to extricate the poet out of any difficulty which embarraſſes him: but that the preſence of a divinity, and ſome action ſurprizing and extraordinary, are inſerted into almoſt all the parts of his work, in order to render it more majeſtic and more admirable. But this mixture ought to be ſo made, that the machines might be retrenched without taking any thing from the action. At the ſame time it gives the readers a leſſon of piety and virtue; and teaches them, that the moſt brave and the moſt wiſe can do nothing, and attain nothing great and glorious, without the aſſiſtance of heaven. Thus the machinery crowns the whole work, and renders it at once marvellous, probable, and moral.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

Minerva's descent to Ithaca.

The poem opens within forty-eight days of the arrival of Ulysses in his dominions. He had now remained seven years in the island of Calypso, when the gods assembled in council proposed the method of his departure from thence, and his return to his native country. For this purpose it is concluded to send Mercury to Calypso, and Pallas immediately descends to Ithaca. She holds a conference with Telemachus, in the shape of Mentes king of the Taphians; in which she advises him to take a journey in quest of his father Ulysses, to Pylos and Sparta, where Nestor and Menelaus yet reigned: then, after having visibly displayed her divinity, disappears. The suitors of Penelope make great entertainments, and riot in her palace till night. Phemius sings to them the return of the Grecians, till Penelope puts a stop to the song. Some words arise between the suitors and Telemachus, who summons the council to meet the day following.

THE man, for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, oh muse! resound.

NOTES.

We shall proceed in the same method through the course of these annotations upon the Odyssey, as in those

Who, when his arms had wrought the deſtin'd fall
Of ſacred Troy, and raz'd her heav'n-built wall,

upon the Iliad; conſidering Homer chiefly as a poet, endeavouring to make his beauties underſtood, and not to praiſe without a reaſon given. It is equally an extreme, on the one hand to think Homer has no human defects; and on the other to dwell ſo much upon thoſe defects, as to depreciate his beauties. The greater part of critics form a general character, from the obſervation of particular errors, taken in their own oblique or imperfect views; which is as unjuſt, as to make a judgment of the beauty of a man's body from the ſhadow it happens to caſt, in ſuch or ſuch a poſition. To convince the reader of this intended impartiality, we readily allow the Odyſſey to be inferior to the Iliad in many reſpects. It has not that ſublimity of ſpirit, or that enthuſiaſm of poetry; but then it muſt be allowed, if it be leſs noble, it is more inſtructive: the other abounds with more heroiſm, this with more morality. The Iliad gives us a draught of gods and heroes, of diſcord, of contentions, and ſcenes of ſlaughter; the Odyſſey ſets before us a ſcene more amiable, the land-ſkips of nature, the pleaſures of private life, the duties of every ſtation, the hoſpitality of antient times; a leſs buſy, but more agreeable portrait. The Iliad concludes with the ruin, the Odyſſey with the happineſs of a nation. Horace was of the ſame opinion, as is evident from the epiſtle to Lollius.

Seditione, dolis, ſcelere, atque libidine, et ira,
Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra.
Rurſus, quid virtus et quid ſapientia poſſit,
Utile propoſuit nobis exemplar Ulyſſem.

ỳ. 1. *The man, for wiſdom,* etc.] Homer opens his poem with the utmoſt ſimplicity and modeſty; he continually grows upon the reader,

Wand'ring from clime to clime, observant stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.

Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem
Cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat.

Cicero lays this down as a rule for the orator, *principia verecunda, non elatis intensa verbis*; and Horace for the poet, *Nec sic incipies*, etc. He proposes the beginning of the Odyssey as a pattern for all future poems, and has translated them in his Art of poetry.

Dic mihi, musa, virum, captae post tempora Trojae,
Qui mores hominum multorum vidit, et urbes.

May I be forgiven the arrogance, if I should offer a criticism upon this translation: the sufferings of Ulysses are the subject of the whole Odyssey, and yet Horace has ommitted the mention of those sufferings: ὅς μάλα πολλὰ πλάγχθη. There is another word also which seems essential, that is, πολύτροπον, this is likewise omitted. For the sufferings of Ulysses, and the wisdom by which he extricated himself from them, enter into the very design of the poem. But indeed in another place he has plainly had regard to all these circumstances,

Qui domitor Trojae, multorum providus urbes
Et mores hominum inspexit, latumque per aequor
Dum sibi, dum sociis, reditum parat, aspera multa
Pertulit ——— Epist. ad Loll.

I must also refute a criticism of Rapin, who will have it, that the word, πολύτροπος, includes a character of craft and low cunning, unworthy of a brave spirit: but Eustathius admirably vindicates the poet in this respect; he shews us that τρόπος no where in Homer signifies ἤθη, or morals; and that it implies a man who could accommodate himself to every condition of life; one who, in the worst estate, had still a reserve to free himself from

On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore:

It; it therefore, says he, signifies a man that, through experience, has learned wisdom. I have likewise the authority of Horace for this sense, in the above-cited passage,

Qui domitor Trojae, multorum providus urbes.

I take *providus*, in this place, to signify not only a man who noted the manners of various nations with care, but also one who, in calamity, could foresee methods to extricate himself from it. And surely nothing can be more unjust than what Rapin objects against Ulysses, in employing his wisdom only in his own preservation, while all his companions were lost: Homer himself sufficiently refutes this objection, and directly tells us, that he employed his wisdom in the care of their safety, but that they, through their folly, defeated his wisdom. The words of Homer, says Eustathius, shew that a wise man neglects not his friends in adversity. But, says Rapin, what could oblige Homer to begin with so dishonourable an action, and place the greatest weakness of his hero in the very frontispiece of his poem? and invoke his muse to sing the man who with difficulty saved himself, and suffered his companions to be destroyed? There had been some weight in this objection, if Ulysses had saved his own, with the loss of their lives; but I cannot see any dishonour, in his preserving himself by wisdom, when they destroyed themselves by folly: it was chiefly by storms that they perished; it can be no imputation to his character, not to be able to restrain the effects of a tempest: he did all that a wise man could do, he gave them such admonitions upon every emergency, that if they had pursued them, they had been preserved as well as Ulysses.

ỳ. 1. *For wisdom's various arts renown'd.*] Bossu's observation in relation to this epithet, πολύτροπος, given

Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day;

to Ulyſſes, is worth tranſcribing. The fable of the Odyſſey, ſays he, is wholly for the conduct and policy of a ſtate: therefore the quality it requires is wiſdom, but this virtue is of too large an extent for the ſimplicity which a juſt and preciſe character requires; it is therefore requiſite it ſhould be limited. The great art of kings is the myſtery of diſſimulation. It is well known, that Lewis the eleventh, for the inſtruction of his ſon, reduced all the Latin language to theſe words only, viz. *Qui neſcit diſſimulare neſcit regnare.* It was likewiſe by this practice that Saul began his reign, when he was firſt elected, and as yet full of the ſpirit of God. The firſt thing we read of him in holy writ is, † that he made as if he did not hear the words which ſeditious people ſpoke againſt him.

This then is the character which the Greek poet gives his Ulyſſes in the propoſition of his poem; he calls him ἄνδρα πολύτροπον; to denote this prudent diſſimulation, which diſguiſed him ſo many ways, and put him upon taking ſo many ſhapes.

Without mentioning any thing of Circe, who detained him with her a whole year, and who was famous for the transformations ſhe made of all ſorts of perſons; the reader finds him at firſt with Calypſo, the daughter of wiſe Atlas, who bore up the vaſt pillars that reached from earth to heaven, and whoſe knowlege penetrated into the depths of the unfathomable ocean: that is to ſay, who was ignorant of nothing in heaven, earth, or ſea. And as the firſt product and principal part of ſo high, ſo ſolid, and ſo profound a knowlege, was to know how to conceal one's ſelf; this wiſe man called his daughter by a name that ſignified a *ſecret* *. The

† *Ille vero diſſimulabat ſe audire.* Reg. lib. 1.
* Καλύπτειν.

The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah men unbliss'd!) to touch that natal shore.

poet makes his hero, whom he designed for a politician, to stay seven whole years with this nymph. She taught him so well, that afterwards he lost no opportunity of putting her lessons in practice: for he does nothing without a disguise. At his parting from Ogygia he is cast upon the isle of Phaeacia: as kind as his reception was, yet he stays till the night before he went off ere he would discover himself. From thence he goes to Ithaca: the first adventure that happened to him there was with Minerva, the most prudent among the deities, as Ulysses was the most prudent among men. She says so expressly in that very passage. Nor did they fail to disguise themselves. Minerva takes upon her the shape of a shepherd, and Ulysses tells her he was obliged to fly from Crete, because he had murdered the son of king Idomeneus. The goddess discovers herself first, and commends him particularly, because these artifices were so easy and natural to him, that they seemed to be born with him. Afterwards the hero, under the form of a beggar, deceives first of all Eumeus, then his son, and last of all his wife, and every body else, till he found an opportunity of punishing his enemies, to whom he discovered not himself till he killed them, namely, on the last night. After his discovering himself in the palace, he goes the next day to deceive his father, appearing at first under a borrowed name; before he would give him joy of his return. Thus he takes upon him all manner of shapes, and dissembles to the very last. But the poet joins to this character a valour and a constancy which render him invincible in the most daring and desperate adventures.

℣. 3. *Who, when his arms had wrought the destin'd fall*
Of sacred Troy ———

Whence is it that Ulysses is said to have overthrown Troy,

Oh ſnatch ſome portion of theſe acts from fate,
Celeſtial muſe! and to our world relate.

Troy, and not Achilles, who was of more remarkable courage than Ulyſſes? Euſtathius tells us, that the deſtruction of Troy ought to be aſcribed chiefly to Ulyſſes, as he not only took away the Palladium, but was the inventor of the ſtratagem of the wooden horſe, by which that city was conquered. Virgil, in his ſecond book of the Æneis gives us a noble deſcription of its deſtruction, by which we find that Ulyſſes was not only the contriver of its ruin, but bore a great ſhare in the actions of the night in which that city was overturned.

℣. 9. *Vain toils! their impious folly*, etc.] By this ſingle trait, Homer marks an eſſential difference between the Iliad and the Odyſſey: namely, that in the former poem the people periſhed by the folly of their kings:

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

In this, the people periſh by their own folly, while their prince omits nothing to procure their felicity. A plain reaſon why the Odyſſey is more calculated for the people than the Iliad. Dacier.

℣. 13. *Oh ſnatch ſome portion of theſe acts from fate.*] It may be aſked why the poet invokes the muſe to recount only part of the ſufferings of Ulyſſes? and why thoſe words, *to us alſo*, are inſerted? To the firſt it may be anſwered, that an heroic poem dwells chiefly upon incidents of importance, and paſſes over every thing that does not contribute to raiſe our idea of the hero, or to the main deſign of the poem: to the other Euſtathius anſwers ſeveral ways; either, ſays he, the word καὶ is to be taken as an expletive, as it is in a thouſand places in Homer; or it means that this is a ſubject ſo conſiderable, that it will be a theme to many poets: or that being a true hiſtory it had ſpread over many nations of the world, and that Homer himſelf received the ſtory of the poem from Ægypt; and then

Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd;
All who the wars of ten long years ſurviv'd,

the meaning will be, "Sing, o muſe, to the Greeks, "as well as to other nations, the ſufferings of Ulyſſes." I ſhould prefer the firſt as being the moſt natural: the reſt ſeem forced, and conſequently improper for the opening of a poem, where the utmoſt plainneſs is neceſſary; eſpecially, if we conſider that Ulyſſes was a Grecian, and it is not probable that the Grecians ſhould be the leaſt acquainted with the ſtory, or the lateſt to celebrate the actions, of a Grecian.

ỽ. 15. *Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd.*] It is neceſſary, for the better underſtanding of the poem, to fix the period of time from which it takes its beginning: Homer, as Euſtathius obſerves, does not begin with the wanderings of Ulyſſes, he ſteps at once into the latter end of his actions, and leaves the preceeding ſtory to be told by way of narration. Thus in his Iliad, he dates his poem from the anger of Achilles, which happened almoſt at the concluſion of the Trojan war. From hence Horace drew his obſervation in his Arte Poet.

Semper ad eventum feſtinat; et in medias res,
Non ſecus at notas, auditorum rapit.

There are but forty-eight days from the departure of Ulyſſes from Calypſo, to his diſcovery in Ithaca; he had been one year with Circe, and ſeven with Calypſo, when the gods diſpatched Mercury to that goddeſs; from which point of time we are to date the Odyſſey.

This obſervation gives a reaſon why the poet invokes the muſe to recount the wanderings of this hero in part only; for Ulyſſes, as appears from the beginning of the ninth book, after he left the ſhores of Troy, was driven to Iſmarus of the Ciconians. An hiſtorian muſt have begun from the fall of Troy, and related his wandrings with truth and order; for hiſtory is chiefly

And 'ſcap'd the perils of the gulfy main.
Ulyſſes, ſole of all the victor train,
An exile from his dear paternal coaſt,
Deplor'd his abſent queen, and empire loſt.
Calypſo in her caves conſtrain'd his ſtay,
With ſweet, reluctant, amorous delay:
In vain—for now the circling years diſcloſe
The day predeſtin'd to reward his woes.
At length his Ithaca is giv'n by fate,
Where yet new labours his arrival wait:
At length their rage the hoſtile Pow'rs reſtrain,
All but the ruthleſs monarch of the main.

for inſtruction: but a poet takes another method, and diſpoſes every circumſtance arbitrarily; he chuſes or rejects, as ſuites beſt with his principal deſign, and in ſuch a manner as to give at once delight and inſtruction.

ỳ. 21. *Calypſo in her cave conſtrain'd his ſtay.*] To the remark before cited of Boſſu, upon the abode of Ulyſſes with Calypſo, may be added this of the abbe Fraguier: that his reſiding ſeven years in the caves of Calypſo, (the goddeſs of ſecrecy) may only mean that he remained ſo long hid from the knowlege and enquiry of all men; or that whatever befel him in all that time was loſt to hiſtory, or made no part in the poem.

ỳ. 28. *All but the ruthleſs monarch of the main.*] It may be aſked, why Neptune is thus enraged againſt Ulyſſes? Homer himſelf tells us, it was becauſe that hero had put out the eye of his ſon Cyclops. But if we take Neptune by way of allegory for the ocean, the paſſage implies, that the ſufferings of Ulyſſes were chiefly by ſea; and therefore poetry, which adds a

But now the god, remote, a heav'nly gueſt
In Æthiopia grac'd the genial feaſt,
(A race divided, whom with ſloping rays
The riſing and deſcending ſun ſurveys)
There on the world's extremeſt verge rever'd,
With hecatombs and pray'r in pomp prefer'd,
Diſtant he lay: while in the bright abodes
Of high Olympus, Jove conven'd the gods:

grandeur to the meaneſt circumſtance, introduces the god of it as his greateſt enemy. Euſtathius.

℣. 30. *In Æthiopia*, etc.] Strabo, in his firſt book, delivers his opinion, that "the antient Grecians includ-'ed all thoſe people who lived upon the ſouthern ocean, 'from eaſt to weſt, in the general name of Æthiopians, 'and that it was not confined to thoſe only who lay 'ſouth of Egypt." Ptolomy ſays, that "under the 'Zodiac, from eaſt to weſt, inhabit the Æthiopians, 'black of colour." And elſewhere the ſame geographer divides Æthiopia into the eaſtern and the weſtern. The eaſtern and weſtern Æthiopians were ſeparated by the Arabian or Egyptian gulf; which though never mentioned by Homer, as Ariſtarchus remarked, yet it is not probable, ſays Strabo, that he ſhould be ignorant of it, it being but a thouſand ſtadia diſtant from the Mediterranean, when he knew the Egyptian Thebes, which was four times as far off. Strab. Plin. Spondan.

I will not repeat what was obſerved upon the gods being gone to the Æthiopians, in the firſt book of the Iliad; it is ſufficient in general to obſerve, that the Æthiopians were a people very religious towards the gods, and that they held a pompous feaſt twelve days annually to their honour; and in particular, that the poet very judiciouſly makes uſe of this ſolemnity to remove Neptune out of the way, who was the enemy of

Th' aſſembly thus the ſire ſupreme addreſt,
Ægyſthus' fate revolving in his breaſt,
Whom young Oreſtes to the dreary coaſt
Of Pluto ſent, a blood-polluted ghoſt.

Perverſe mankind! whoſe wills, created free,
Charge all their woes on abſolute decree;
All to the dooming gods their guilt tranſlate,
And follies are miſcall'd the crimes of fate.
When to his luſt Ægyſthus gave the rein,
Did fate, or we, th' adult'rous act conſtrain?

Ulyſſes, that he may, with greater ſecurity, bring off his hero from Calypſo's iſland. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 41. *Jupiter's ſpeech.*] The ſolemnity and ſententiouſneſs of this ſpeech is taken notice of by Euſtathius; and ſurely poetry muſt be highly valuable, when it delivers ſuch excellent inſtructions. It contained the whole of religion among the antients; and made philoſophy more agreeable. This paſſage is an inſtance of it, a paſſage worthy of a Chriſtian; it ſhews us that the ſupreme being is ſovereignly good; that he rewards the juſt, and puniſhes the unjuſt; and that the folly of man, and not the decree of heaven, is the cauſe of human calamity.

ỳ. 45. *Ægyſthus.*] It is difficult to find a reaſon why, in the original, Jupiter ſhould give ſuch an honourable appellation to Ægyſthus, as ἀμύμονος, *unblameable*, who had diſhonoured the bed of Agamemnon, and taken his life away; eſpecially in that very inſtant when he condemns the fact with ſo great ſolemnity: Euſtathius ſays, that Homer, an enemy to cenſure and invective, introduces that god as having reſpect only to his good qualities, and commending him for his general character; and adds, that it had been an indecency in the poet to have given countenance to that baſe cuſtom by the

Did fate, or we, when great Atrides dy'd,
Urge the bold traitor to the regicide?
Hermes I ſent, while yet his ſoul remain'd
Sincere from royal blood, and faith profan'd;

authority of Jupiter. Dacier is not ſatisfy'd with this reaſon, and tells us that Homer gives Ægyſthus this title, to vindicate Jupiter from the imputation of his crimes: he gives us to underſtand, that heaven is not the cauſe of man's failings; that he is by creation able to act virtuouſly, and that it is through his own miſconduct that he deviates into evil; and therefore the meaning is this; ' Jupiter calling to mind Ægyſthus, that Ægyſthus, ' whom he had created wiſe and virtuous, and made ' capable to ſuſtain that character." And this agrees admirably with the beginning of the ſpeech of Jupiter, who there vindicates his own divinity.

But if this ſhould ſeem too refined, it may be ſufficient to take the word in that good ſenſe which Ægyſthus might have deſerved for many good qualities: thus Achilles is called the *ſwift of foot*, even while he ſtands, or ſleeps; the firſt being his general character. It may be further confirmed by a paſſage ſomething reſembling it in the holy ſcriptures: the Egyptian midwives were guilty of a lye to Pharaoh, and yet God pardons it, and bleſſes them: he bleſſes them not becauſe they lyed, but becauſe they preſerved the children of the Iſraelites.

℣. 49. *Hermes I ſent*, etc.] It would be endleſs to obſerve every moral paſſage in the Odyſſey, the whole of it being but one leſſon of morality. But ſurely it muſt be a pleaſure to the reader to learn what notions the antients had of a deity, from the oldeſt book extant, except the book of Moſes.

Jupiter here declares that he never fails to warn mankind from evil, and that he had ſent Mercury for this purpoſe to Ægyſthus. It may be aſked what is

To warn the wretch, that young Oreſtes grown
To manly years ſhould re-aſſert the throne.
Yet impotent of mind, and uncontrol'd,
He plung'd into the gulf which heav'n foretold.
Here paus'd the god, and penſive thus replies,
Minerva graceful with her azure eyes.
O thou! from whom the whole creation ſprings,
The ſource of pow'r on earth deriv'd to kings!

this Mercury whom Jupiter ſends? It is the light of nature, which heaven implants in the breaſt of every man: and which, as Cicero ſays, is not only more antient than the world, but co-eval with the maſter of the world himſelf. He writes to this effect. *There was from the beginning ſuch a thing as reaſon, a direct emanation from nature itſelf, which prompted to good, and averted from evil. A reaſon which did not then become a law, when it was firſt reduced to writing, but was ſo even from the moment it exiſted, and it exiſted from ever, of an equal date with the divine intelligence: it is the true and primordial law, proper to command and to forbid, it is the reaſon of the great Jupiter.*

That reaſon of the ſupreme being is here called Mercury; that reaſon flowing from God, which is conſtantly dictating to the moſt corrupt hearts, *this is good*, or *this is evil*. Hence aroſe an antient proverb, recorded by Simplicius, *Reaſon is a Mercury to all men.* Epictetus [lib. 3. Arrian.] ſays, *Apollo knew that Laius would not obey his oracle. Apollo nevertheleſs did not neglect to propheſy to Laius thoſe evils that threatened him. The goodneſs of the divinity never fails to advertiſe mankind; that ſource of truth is ever open and free: but men are ever incredulous, diſobedient and rebellious.* Dacier.

℣. 57. *Minerva's ſpeech.*] It may be aſked what relation Ulyſſes has to Ægyſthus, that the mention of the one ſhould immediately give occaſion for the remem-

His death was equal to the direful deed;
So may the man of blood be doom'd to bleed!
But grief and rage alternate wound my breast
For brave Ulysses, still by fate opprest.
Amidst an isle, around whose rocky shore
The forests murmur, and the surges roar,
The blameless hero from his wish'd-for home
A goddess guards in her enchanted dome.
(Atlas her sire, to whose far-piercing eye
The wonders of the deep expanded lie;

brance of the other? and it may appear unnatural in the poet to give rise to his poem by so unexpected a transition from Ægysthus to Ulysses. Eustathius vindicates Homer, by shewing that it is not only beautiful but natural, to take rise from what offers itself to our immediate observation. What can be more natural, when Jupiter is relating how he punishes the wicked, than for Wisdom or Minerva to suggest, that the good ought to be rewarded? There is no forced introduction; no artful preparation, but the whole arises from the occasion, which is a great beauty. Eustathius.

ỳ. 63. *Amidst an isle,* etc.] There was, according to true history, such an island of Calypso, of which Strabo writes; that Solon gives an account of the island Atlantis bordering upon Egypt, and that he went thither to make enquiry, and learned that an island was once there, but by time was vanished. Eustathius.

ỳ. 67. *Atlas her sire, to whose far-piercing eye*
The wonders of the deep expanded lie;
Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the starry vault, and prop the spheres.]

Atlas is here said to understand all the deeps of the sea: but the epithet, ὀλοόφρονος, applied to him, has two different significations. It implies either, *one whose thoughts*

Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the ſtarry vault, and prop the ſpheres.)
By his fair daughter is the chief confin'd,
Who ſooths to dear delight his anxious mind:
Succeſsleſs all her ſoft careſſes prove,
To baniſh from his breaſt his country's love;

are full of terrible and diſmal things, or *one who has infinite knowlege and unbounded views*, and it is doubtful which of them Homer means. To reconcile both, may we not think our author had heard ſomething of the antient tradition which makes Atlas the ſame perſon with Enoch, and repreſents him as a great aſtronomer, who prophecied of the univerſal deluge, and exhorted mankind to repentance? Therefore he named his ſon Methuſelah, to ſhew that after his death the waters ſhould overſpread the face of the earth. His continual lamentations on this occaſion cauſed him to be called the Weeper; for the world is always an enemy to melancholy predictions. Thus Homer, upon the credit of this tradition, might very well call Atlas, *one whoſe thoughts ran upon diſmal things*, or *one whoſe views and cares were vaſtly extended.*

I inſiſt no otherwiſe upon this, but as a conjecture, yet it is further ſtrengthened by what follows in the next lines: *That Atlas ſuſtains thoſe columns which being fixed upon the earth ſupport the heavens.* This is generally interpreted of his great ſkill in aſtronomy and geography. But may not the reaſon be more particular? Since Atlas or Enoch had prophecied of the deluge, and ſince that prediction was looked upon as the effect of his ſkill in aſtronomy; might it not be ſaid he knew the abyſſes of the ſea, and ſuſtained the pillars of heaven, to expreſs that he knew how the fountains of the deep, and the waters above the heavens, ſhould unite to drown the earth?

As to the image of the pillars of heaven, it is fre-

To ſee the ſmoke from his lov'd palace riſe,
While the dear iſle in diſtant proſpect lies,
With what contentment could he cloſe his eyes?
And will omnipotence neglect to ſave
The ſuffering virtue of the wiſe and brave?
Muſt he, whoſe altars on the Phrygian ſhore
With frequent rites, and pure, avow'd thy pow'r,

quent in the ſacred books, and uſed to expreſs the height of vaſt mountains. (Pindar calls Ætna the ὠρανίαν κίονα:) and there might probably be ſomething more particular that furniſhed Homer with this idea; I mean the pillars of Hercules, well-known in his time, and neighbouring to the mountain he deſcribes. Dacier.

See the deſcription of this mountain in the fourth book of Virgil, where the ſame image is preſerved without any hint of allegory: as indeed it is no more than a poetical manner of expreſſing the great height and extenſive proſpect of the mountain.

ỳ. 75. *To ſee the ſmoke from his lov'd palace riſe.*] There is an agreeable tenderneſs in this image, and nothing can better paint the ardent deſire a man naturally has to review his native country after a long abſence. This is ſtill ſtronger than that which Cicero extols in ſeveral places of his works, that Ulyſſes preferred the ſight of Ithaca to the immortality proffered him by Calypſo. He here deſires to purchaſe, at the price of his life, the pleaſure, not of returning to his country, but even ſeeing at a diſtance the very ſmoke of it. Dacier.

There are ſome things diſperſed in this ſpeech of Pallas, which I ſhall lay together; as that Minerva makes it an aggravation to the calamity of Ulyſſes, to be detained by a goddeſs that loves him; that he is incloſed in an iſland; and ſhe adds, round which the ſeas flow; as if that was not common to all iſlands; but theſe ex-

Be doom'd the worſt of human ills to prove,
Unbleſs'd, abandon'd to the wrath of Jove?
  Daughter! what words have paſs'd thy lips unweigh'd?
(Reply'd the Thund'rer to the martial maid)
Deem not unjuſtly by my doom oppreſt
Of human race the wiſeſt and the beſt.
Neptune, by pray'r repentant rarely won,
Afflicts the chief, t' avenge his giant ſon,

preſſions are uſed to ſhew the impoſſibility of the eſcape of Ulyſſes, without the interpoſition of Jupiter.

In the concluſion ſhe obſerves, that Ulyſſes never neglected to ſacrifice before Troy: this is ſaid to ſhew the great piety of Ulyſſes, who not only paid his ſacrifices in Ithaca, where he abounded in riches, but amongſt ſtrangers in an enemy's country, where there might be a ſcarcity of offerings. Euſtathius.

℣. 84. *Daughter! what words*, etc.] This verſe is frequently repeated both in the Iliad and the Odyſſey; it has here a particular energy. Jupiter reproves Minerva for ſuppoſing he could ever be unmindful of an hero ſo pious as Ulyſſes. It is ſpoken with vehemence; an inſtance, ſays Euſtathius, that it is not only equitable, but an attribute of divinity, for rulers to remember thoſe who ſerve them faithfully.

℣. 89. *T' avenge his giant-ſon.*] It is artful in the poet to tell the reader the occaſion of the ſufferings of Ulyſſes in the opening of the poem; it is a juſtice due to his character, to ſhew that his misfortunes are not the conſequence of his crimes, but the effect of Neptune's anger.

It is obſervable, that Homer does not ſtop to explain how Ulyſſes put out the eye of the Cyclops: he haſtens forward into the middle of his poem, and leaves that for the future narration of Ulyſſes.

Whoſe viſual orb Ulyſſes robb'd of light;
Great Polypheme, of more than mortal might!
Him young Thooſa bore, (the bright increaſe
Of Phorcys, dreaded in the ſounds and ſeas:)
Whom Neptune ey'd with bloom of beauty bleſt,
And in his cave the yielding nymph compreſt.
For this, the god conſtrains the Greek to roam,
A hopeleſs exile from his native home,
From death alone exempt — but ceaſe to mourn;
Let all combine t' atchieve his wiſh'd return:
Neptune aton'd, his wrath ſhall now refrain,
Or thwart the ſynod of the gods in vain.

  Father and king ador'd! Minerva cry'd,
Since all who in th' Olympian bow'r reſide
Now make the wand'ring Greek their public care,
Let Hermes to th' * Atlantic iſle repair;
Bid him, arriv'd in bright Calypſo's court,
The ſanction of th' aſſembled Pow'rs report:
That wiſe Ulyſſes to his native land
Muſt ſpeed, obedient to their high command.
Mean time Telemachus, the blooming heir
Of ſea-girt Ithaca, demands my care:

* Ogygia.

℣. 110. *Mean time Telemachus—demands my care*, etc.] Rapin has raiſed ſeveral objections againſt this piece of conduct in Homer: he tells us that the action of the Odyſſey is imperfect, that it begins with the voyages of Telemachus, and ends with thoſe of Ulyſſes: that the four firſt books are all concerning Telemachus: that his voyage bears no proportion to that of Ulyſſes; that it con-

tributes nothing to his return, which is brought about by Jupiter, and the aſſiſtance of the Phaeacians; that this gave occaſion to Beni, in his academical diſcourſes, to aſſert, that the fable of the Odyſſey is double, that the four firſt books of it are neither epiſode, nor part of an action, nor have any connection with the reſt of the work.

I am of opinion, that theſe objections are made with too great ſeverity; the deſtruction of the ſuitors is the chief hinge upon which the poem turns, as it contributes chiefly to the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes in his country and regality; and whatever contributes to this end, contributes to the principal action, and is of a piece with the reſt of the poem: and that this voyage does ſo is evident, in that it gives a defeat to the ſuitors, and controls their inſolence; it preſerves Ulyſſes's throne and bed inviolate, in that it gives Telemachus courage to reſiſt their attempts: it ſets his character in a fair point of light, who is the ſecond perſonage of the poem, and is to have a great ſhare in the future actions of it.

Euſtathius judiciouſly obſerves, that Homer here prepares the way for the defeat of the ſuitors, the chief deſign of his poem; and lays the ground-work of probability on which he intends to build his poem, and reconcile it to the rules of credibility.

If it be aſked for what end this voyage of Telemachus is made; the anſwer is, to enquire after Ulyſſes: ſo that whatever epiſodes are interwoven, Ulyſſes is ſtill in view; and whatever Telemachus acts, is undertaken ſolely upon his account; and conſequently, whatever is acted, contributes to the principal deſign, the reſtoration of Ulyſſes. So that the fable is entire, and the action not double.

It is to be remembered alſo, that the ſufferings of Ulyſſes are the ſubject of the poem; his perſonal calamities are not only intended, but his domeſtic misfortunes; and by this conduct Homer ſhews us the extent

'Tis mine to form his green, unpractis'd years,
In ſage debates, ſurrounded with his peers,
To ſave the ſtate; and timely to reſtrain
The bold intruſion of the ſuitor-train;
Who croud his palace, and with lawleſs pow'r
His herds and flocks in feaſtful rites devour.
To diſtant Sparta, and the ſpacious waſte
Of ſandy Pyle, the royal youth ſhall haſte.

of his misfortunes: his queen is attempted, his throne threatened, and his wealth conſumed in riot; Ulyſſes ſuffers in Telemachus, and in every circumſtance of life is unhappy.

℣. 112. *'Tis mine to form his green unpractis'd years*, etc.] In this the poet draws the out-lines of what he is to fill up in the four ſubſequent books: and nothing can give us a greater idea of his unbounded invention, than his building upon ſo plain a foundation ſuch a noble ſuperſtructure: he entertains us with variety of epiſodes, hiſtorical relations, and manners of thoſe antient times. It muſt be confeſſed, that the characters in the Odyſſey, and the number of the chief actors, are but few; and yet the poet never tires, he varies and diverſifies the ſtory ſo happily, that he is continually opening new ſcenes to engage our attention. He reſembles his own Proteus, he is capable of all ſhapes, yet in all ſhapes the ſame deity.

℣. 118. *To diſtant Sparta, and the ſpacious waſte*
Of ſandy Pyle ———]

Rapin is very ſevere upon this conduct. When Telemachus, ſays he, is to ſearch for his father in the courts of Greece, he cannot make the leaſt progreſs without Minerva; it is ſhe who inſpires his thoughts, and aſſiſts in the execution. Could not honour, duty, or nature, have moved his heart towards an abſent father? The machine, adds he, has not the leaſt ap-

There, warm with filial love, the cauſe enquire
That from his realm retards his god-like ſire:
Deliv'ring early to the voice of fame
The promiſe of a great, immortal name.
She ſaid: the ſandals of celeſtial mold
Fledg'd with ambroſial plumes, and rich with gold,
Surround her feet; with theſe ſublime ſhe ſails
Th' aerial ſpace, and mounts the winged gales:
O'er earth and ocean wide prepar'd to ſoar,
Her dreaded arm a beamy jav'lin bore,
Pond'rous and vaſt; which, when her fury burns,
Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hoſts o'erturns.
From high Olympus prone her flight ſhe bends,
And in the realm of Ithaca deſcends.

pearance of probability, inaſmuch as the goddeſs conducts him to every place, except only where Ulyſſes reſides; of which ſhe ought by no means to be ignorant, upon the account of her divinity.

But ſurely nothing can be more natural, than for a ſon, in order to gain intelligence of an abſent father, to enquire in thoſe places, and of thoſe perſons, where and from whom he is moſt likely to have information. Such is the conduct of Telemachus: and poetry, which delights in the wonderful, becauſe this conduct agrees with wiſdom, aſcribes it to Minerva the goddeſs of it. No doubt but Minerva knew where Ulyſſes reſided: but men muſt act as men, ſuch an immediate interpoſition, as Rapin requires, had ſtopped at once the fountain of the poet's invention. If what a poet invents be natural, it is juſtifiable; and he may give the rein to his imagination, if he reſtrain it from running into extravagance and wildneſs.

Her lineaments divine the grave diſguiſe
Of Mentes' form conceal'd from human eyes:
(Mentes, the monarch of the Taphian land)
A glitt'ring ſpear wav'd awful in her hand.
There in the portal plac'd, the heav'n-born maid
Enormous riot and miſ-rule ſurvey'd.

℣. 136. *Mentes, the monarch of the Taphian land.*] We are told by tradition, that Homer was ſo ſenſible of friendſhip, that to do honour to his particular friends, he immortalized their names in his poems. In the Iliad he has ſhewn his gratitude to Tychius; and in the Odyſſey, to Mentes, Phemius, and Mentor. This Mentes was a famous merchant of the iſle of Leucade, who received Homer at Smyrna, and made him his companion in all his voyages. It is to this Mentes we owe the two poems of Homer; for the poet, in all probability, had never wrote them without thoſe lights and informations he received, and the diſcoveries he was enabled to make, by thoſe travels. Homer is not contented to give his name to the king of the Taphians, but feigns alſo that the goddeſs of wiſdom choſe to appear in his ſhape, preferably to that of all the kings who were nearer neighbours to Ithaca. Euſtathius thinks there might have been a real king of Taphos of this name, who was a friend of Ulyſſes. This may poſſibly be; but I would chuſe to adhere rather to the old tradition, as it does honour to friendſhip. Dacier.

℣. 139. *Enormous riot and miſ-rule.*] This is the firſt appearance of the ſuitors; and the poet has drawn their pictures in ſuch colours, as are agreeable to their characters through the whole poem. They are, as Horace expreſſes it,

——— Fruges conſumere nati,
Sponſi Penelopes, Nebulones ———

On hides of beeves before the palace gate,
(Sad ſpoils of luxury) the ſuitors ſate.
With rival art, and ardor in their mien,
At cheſs they vie, to captivate the queen,
Divining of their loves. Attending nigh,
A menial train the flowing bowl ſupply :

The poet gives a fine contraſt between them and Telemachus; he entertains himſelf with his own thoughts, weighs the ſum of things, and beholds, with a virtuous ſorrow, the diſorders of the ſuitors: he appears, (like Ulyſſes among his transformed companions in the tenth book,) a wiſe man, among brutes.

ỳ. 143. *At cheſs they vie, to captivate the queen,*
Divining of their loves ——]

There are great diſputes what this game was, at which the ſuitors played. Athenaeus relates it from Apian the grammarian, who had it from Cteſon, a native of Ithaca, that the ſport was in this manner. The number of the ſuitors being 108, they equally divided their men, or balls; that is to ſay, 54 on each ſide; theſe were placed on the board oppoſite to each other. Between the two ſides was a vacant ſpace, in the midſt of which was the main mark, or queen, the point which all were to aim at. They took their turns by lot; he who took or diſplaced that mark, got his own in its place; and if, by a ſecond man, he again took it, without touching any of the others, he won the game; and it paſſed as an omen of obtaining his miſtreſs. This principal mark, or queen, was called by whatever name the gameſters pleaſed; and the ſuitors gave it the name of Penelope.

It is ſaid, this game was invented by Palamedes during the ſiege of Troy. [Sophocles in Palam.] Euſtath. Spondan. Dacier.

Others apart the ſpacious hall prepare,
And form the coſtly feaſt with buſy care.
There young Telemachus, his bloomy face
Glowing celeſtial-ſweet with god-like grace,
Amid the circle ſhines: but hope and fear
(Painful viciſſitude!) his boſom tear.
Now imag'd in his mind, he ſees reſtor'd
In peace and joy, the people's rightful Lord;
The proud oppreſſors fly the vengeful ſword.
While his fond ſoul theſe fancied triumphs ſwell'd,
The ſtranger gueſt the royal youth beheld.
Griev'd that a viſitant ſo long ſhould wait
Unmark'd, unhonour'd, at a monarch's gate;
Inſtant he flew with hoſpitable haſte,
And the new friend with courteous air embrac'd.
Stranger! whoe'er thou art, ſecurely reſt
Affianc'd in my faith, a friendly gueſt:
Approach the dome, the ſocial banquet ſhare,
And then the purpoſe of thy ſoul declare.
  Thus affable and mild, the prince precedes,
And to the dome th' unknown celeſtial leads.

℣. 157. *Griev'd that a viſitant ſo long ſhould wait.*] The reader will loſe much of the pleaſure of this poem, if he reads it without the reflection, that he peruſes one of the moſt antient books in the world; it ſets before him perſons, places, and actions that exiſted three thouſand years ago: here we have an inſtance of the humanity of thoſe early ages: Telemachus pays a reverence to this ſtranger, only becauſe he is a ſtranger: he attends him in perſon, and welcomes him with all the openneſs of antient hoſpitality.

The ſpear receiving from her hand, he plac'd
Againſt a column, fair with ſculpture grac'd;
Where ſeemly rang'd in peaceful order ſtood
Ulyſſes' arms, now long diſus'd to blood.
He led the goddeſs to the ſovereign ſeat,
Her feet ſupported with a ſtool of ſtate;
(A purple carpet ſpread the pavement wide)
Then drew his ſeat, familiar to her ſide;
Far from the ſuitor-train, a brutal croud,
With inſolence, and wine, elate and loud;
Where the free gueſt, unnoted, might relate,
If haply conſcious, of his father's fate.
The golden ew'r a maid obſequious brings,
Repleniſh'd from the cool, tranſlucent ſprings;
With copious water the bright vaſe ſupplies
A ſilver laver, of capacious ſize:
They waſh. The tables in fair order ſpread,
They heap the glitt'ring caniſters with bread:
Viands of various kinds allure the taſte,
Of choiſeſt ſort and ſavour, rich repaſt!

℣. 185. etc. *The feaſt deſcrib'd.*] There is nothing that has drawn more ridicule upon Homer, than the frequent deſcriptions of his entertainments; it has been judged, that he was more than ordinarily delighted with them, ſince he omits no opportunity to deſcribe them; nay, his temperance has not been unſuſpected, according to that verſe of Horace,

Laudibus arguitur vini vinoſus Homerus.

But we muſt not condemn without ſtronger evidence: a man may commend a ſumptuous entertainment, or good

Delicious wines th' attending herald brought;
The gold gave luſtre to the purple draught.
Lur'd with the vapour of the fragrant feaſt,
In ruſh'd the ſuitors with voracious haſte:
Marſhal'd in order due, to each a ſew'r
Preſents, to bath his hands, a radiant ew'r.
Luxurious then they feaſt. Obſervant round
Gay, ſtripling youths the brimming goblets crown'd.
The rage of hunger quell'd, they all advance,
And form to meaſur'd airs the mazy dance:

wines, without being either a drunkard or a glutton. But ſince there are ſo many entertainments deſcribed in the poem, it may not be improper to give this ſome explanation.

They waſh before the feaſt; perhaps, ſays Euſtathius, becauſe they always at the feaſt made libations to the gods. The ewer was of gold, the veſſel from whence the water was poured of ſilver, and the cups, out of which they drank, were of gold.

A damſel attends Mentes, but heralds wait upon the ſuitors: Euſtathius obſerves a decency in this conduct; the ſuitors were lewd debauchees, and conſequently a woman of modeſty would have been an improper attendant upon ſuch a company. Beautiful youths attended the company in quality of cup-bearers.

A matron who has charge of the houſhold (ταμίη) brings in the bread and the cold meats, for ſo Euſtathius interprets εἴδατα; an officer, whoſe employ it was to portion out the victuals, brings in the meats that furniſhed out the reſt of the entertainment; and after the feaſt, a bard diverts them with vocal and inſtrumental muſic.

Dacier is in great pain about the cold victuals; ſhe is afraid leſt the reader ſhould think them the leavings

To Phemius was conſign'd the chorded lyre,
Whoſe hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:
Phemius, whoſe voice divine could ſweeteſt ſing
High ſtrains reſponſive to the vocal ſtring.

Mean while, in whiſpers to his heavenly gueſt
His indignation thus the prince expreſt.

Indulge my riſing grief, whilſt theſe (my friend)
With ſong and dance the pompous revel end.

of a former day; and tells us they might poſſibly be in the nature of our cold tongues, jambons, etc. But I think ſuch fears to be groundleſs: we muſt have reference to the cuſtoms of thoſe early ages; and if it was cuſtomary for cold meats to be ſerved up, (neither is it neceſſary to ſuppoſe them the leavings of the former entertainment) it can be no diſgrace to the hoſpitality of Telemachus.

℣. 197. *To Phemius was conſign'd the chorded lyre.*] In antient times, princes entertained in their families certain learned and wiſe men, who were both poets and philoſophers, and not only made it their buſineſs to amuſe and delight, but to promote wiſdom and morality. Ulyſſes, at his departure for Troy, left one of theſe with Penelope: and it was uſual to conſign, in this manner, the care of their wives and families to the poets of thoſe days, as appears from a ſignal paſſage in the third book, verſe (of the original) 267, etc. To this man Homer gives the name of Phemius; to celebrate one of his friends, who was ſo called, and who had been his preceptor, ſays Euſtathius. I muſt add one remark, that though he places his maſter here in no very good company, yet he guards his character from any imputation, by telling us, that he attended the ſuitors by compulſion. This is not only a great inſtance of his gratitude, but alſo of his tenderneſs and delicacy.

Light is the dance, and doubly ſweet the lays,
When, for the dear delight, another pays.
His treaſur'd ſtores theſe cormorants conſume,
Whoſe bones, defrauded of a regal tomb
And common turf, lie naked on the plain,
Or doom'd to welter in the whelming main.
Should he return, that troop ſo blithe and bold,
With purple robes inwrought, and ſtiff with gold,
Precipitant in fear, would wing their flight,
And curſe their cumbrous pride's unwieldy weight.
But ah I dream!—th' appointed hour is fled,
And hope, too long with vain deluſion fed,
Deaf to the rumour of fallacious fame,
Gives to the roll of death his glorious name!
With venial freedom let me now demand
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land:
Sincere, from whence began thy courſe, recite,
And to what ſhip I owe the friendly freight?
Now firſt to me this viſit doſt thou daign,
Or number'd in my father's ſocial train?
All who deſerv'd his choice, he made his own,
And curious much to know, he far was known.

℣. 225. *All who deſerv'd his choice*—] It is evident, from this, and many places in the Iliad, that hoſpitality was hereditary; an happineſs and honour peculiar to thoſe heroic ages. And ſurely nothing can ſet the character of Ulyſſes in a more agreeable point of light, than what Telemachus here delivers of it: ‘He was the friend ‘of all mankind.’ Euſtathius obſerves, that ἐπίστροφος has a middle ſignification; that it implies, that Ulyſſes

My birth I boaſt (the blue-ey'd virgin cries)
From great Anchialus, renown'd and wiſe :
Mentes my name ; I rule the Taphian race,
Whoſe bounds the deep circumfluent waves embrace :
A duteous people, and induſtrious iſle,
To naval arts inur'd, and ſtormy toil.
Freighted with iron from my native land,
I ſteer my voyage to the Brutian ſtrand ;
To gain by commerce, for the labour'd maſs,
A juſt proportion of refulgent braſs.

behaved benevolently to all men ; or, that all men behaved benevolently to Ulyſſes ; either ſenſe makes Ulyſſes a very amiable perſon : he muſt be a friend to all men, to whom all men are friends.

℣. 234, *I ſteer my voyage to the Brutian ſtrand.*] In the country of the Brutians, in the lower part of Italy, was a town called Themeſe. That Homer here meant this city, and not one of the ſame name in Cyprus, appears not only becauſe this was famous for works of braſs, but becauſe, as Strabo obſerves, Ithaca lay in the direct way from Taphos to this city of the Brutii ; whereas it was conſiderably out of the way to paſs by Ithaca to that of Cyprus. The ſame author ſays, that the rooms for preparing of braſs were remaining in his time, though then out of uſe. Ovid. Met. 15.

Hippotodaeque domos regis, Temeſeſque metalla.

And Statius, Sylv.

———*ſe totis Temeſe dedit hauſta metallis.*

Bochart is of opinion, that the name of Temeſe was given to this town by the Phoenicians, from the braſs it produced, Temes, in their language, ſignifying fuſion of metals : an art to which the Phoenicians much applied themſelves. Euſtat. Dacier.

Far from your capital my ſhip reſides
At Reithrus, and ſecure at anchor rides;
Where waving groves on airy Neion grow,
Supremely tall, and ſhade the deeps below.
Thence to re-viſit your imperial dome,
An old hereditary gueſt I come:
Your father's friend. Laertes can relate
Our faith unſpotted, and its early date;
Who preſt with heart-corroding grief and years,
To the gay court a rural ſhed prefers,

ŷ. 245. *Laertes's retirement.*] This moſt beautiful paſſage of Laertes has not eſcaped the cenſure of the critics: they ſay he acts an unmanly part, he forgets that he is a king, and reduces himſelf unworthily into the condition of a ſervant. Euſtathius gives two reaſons for his retirement, which anſwer thoſe objections; the firſt is, that he could not endure to ſee the outrage and inſolence of the ſuitors; the ſecond, that his grief for Ulyſſes makes him abandon ſociety, and prefer his vineyard to his court. This is undoubtedly the picture of human nature under affliction; for ſorrow loves ſolitude. Thus it is, as Dacier well obſerves, that Menedemus, in Terence, laments his loſt ſon: Menedemus is the picture of Laertes. Nor does it make any difference, that the one is a king, the other a perſon of private ſtation: kings are but ennobled humanity, and are liable, as other men, to as great, if not greater, ſenſibility.

The word ἑρπύζοντα (*creeping* about his vineyard) has alſo given offence, as it carries an idea of meanneſs with it; but Euſtathius obſerves, that it excellently expreſſes the melancholy of Laertes, and denotes no meanneſs of ſpirit: the ſame word is applied to the great

Where ſole of all his train, a matron ſage
Supports with homely food his drooping age,
With feeble ſteps from marſhalling his vines
Returning ſad, when toilſom day declines.
  With friendly ſpeed, induc'd by erring fame,
To hail Ulyſſes' ſafe return I came:
But ſtill the frown of ſome celeſtial pow'r
With envious joy retards the bliſsful hour.
Let not your ſoul be ſunk in ſad deſpair;
He lives, he breathes this heav'nly vital air,
Among a ſavage race, whoſe ſhelfy bounds
With ceaſeleſs roar the foaming deep ſurrounds.

Achilles in the Iliad, when he laments at the obſequies of Patroclus; and Horace no doubt had it in his view,

—*Tacitum ſylvas inter-reptare ſalubres.*

℣. 257. *Among a ſavage race,* etc.] It is the obſervation of Euſtathius, that what Minerva here delivers bears reſemblance to the oracles, in which part is falſe, part true: that Ulyſſes is detained in an iſland, is a truth; that he is detained by barbarians, a falſhood: this is done by the goddeſs, that ſhe may be thought to be really a man, as ſhe appears to be; ſhe ſpeaks with the dubiouſneſs of a man, not the certainty of a goddeſs; ſhe raiſes his expectation, by ſhewing ſhe has an inſight into futurity; and to engage his belief ſhe diſcovers in part the truth to Telemachus. Neither was it neceſſary or convenient for Telemachus to know the whole truth: for if he had known that Ulyſſes inhabited a deſart, detained by a goddeſs, he muſt of conſequence have known of his return, (for he that could certify the one, could certify the other,) and ſo had never gone in ſearch of him; and it would hence have hap-

The thoughts which rowl within my raviſh'd breaſt,
To me, no ſeer, th' inſpiring gods ſuggeſt;
Nor ſkill'd, nor ſtudious, with prophetic eye
To judge the winged omens of the ſky.
Yet hear this certain ſpeech, nor deem it vain;
Though adamantine bonds the chief reſtrain,
The dire reſtraint his wiſdom will defeat,
And ſoon reſtore him to his regal ſeat.
But, gen'rous youth! ſincere and free declare,
Are you of manly growth, his royal heir?
For ſure Ulyſſes in your look appears,
The ſame his features, if the ſame his years.
Such was that face, on which I dwelt with joy
Ere Greece aſſembled ſtem'd the tydes to Troy;
But parting then for that deteſted ſhore,
Our eyes unhappy! never greeting more.
   To prove a genuine birth, the prince replies,
On female truth aſſenting faith relies;

pened, that Homer had been deprived of giving us thoſe graces of poetry which ariſe from the voyage of Telemachus. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 275. *To prove a genuine birth*, etc.] There is an appearance of ſomething very ſhocking in this ſpeech of Telemachus. It literally runs thus: *My mother aſſures me that I am the ſon of Ulyſſes, but I know it not.* It ſeems to reflect upon his mother's chaſtity, as if he had a doubt of his own legitimacy. This ſeeming ſimplicity in Telemachus, ſays Euſtathius, is the effect of a troubled ſpirit; it is grief that makes him doubt if he can be the ſon of the great, the generous Ulyſſes; it is no reflection upon Penelope, and conſequently no

Thus manifeſt of right, I build my claim
Sure-founded on a fair maternal fame,
Ulyſſes' ſon: but happier he, whom fate
Hath plac'd beneath the ſtorms which toſs the great!
Happier the ſon, whoſe hoary ſire is bleſt
With humble affluence, and domeſtic reſt!
Happier than I, to future empire born,
But doom'd a father's wretched fate to mourn!

fault in Telemachus: it is an undoubted truth, that the mother only knows the legitimacy of the child: thus Euripides,

Ἡ μὲν, γὰρ αὑτῆς οἶδεν ὄντα ὃδ' οἴεται.

thar is, the mother knows the child, the father only believes it.

Thus alſo Menander,

Αὐτὸν γὰρ ὐδεὶς οἶδε τῦ πότ' ἐγένετο
Ἀλλ' ὑπονοῦμεν πάντες ἢ πιςεύσομεν.

that is, no man knows aſſuredly who begot him, we only gueſs it, and believe it.

Ariſtotle, in his Rhetoric, is alſo of this opinion;

Ἄριςα περὶ τῶν τέκνων κρίνυσιν ἀι γυναῖκες.

What I have here ſaid, is tranſlated literally from Euſtathius, and if it edifies the reader I am content. But the meaning of the paſſage is this, Mentes aſks Telemachus if he be the ſon of Ulyſſes; he replies, '*So my mother aſſures me; but nothing ſure ſo wretched as I am could proceed from that great man.*'

But however this may be reconciled to truth, I believe few ladies would take it as a complement, if their ſons ſhould tell them there was ſome room to doubt of their legitimacy; there may be abundance of truth in it, and yet very little decency.

To whom, with aſpect mild, the gueſt divine.
Oh true deſcendant of a ſcepter'd line!
The gods, a glorious fate from anguiſh free
To chaſte Penelope's increaſe decree.
But ſay, yon' jovial troop ſo gayly dreſt,
Is this a bridal or a friendly feaſt!
Or from their deed I rightlier may divine,
Unſeemly flown with inſolence and wine?
Unwelcome revellers, whoſe lawleſs joy
Pains the ſage ear, and hurts the ſober eye.
Magnificence of old, (the prince reply'd,)
Beneath our roof with virtue could reſide;
Unblam'd abundance crown'd the royal board,
What time this dome rever'd her prudent lord;
Who now (ſo heav'n decrees) is doom'd to mourn,
Bitter conſtraint! erroneous and forlorn.
Better the chief, on Ilion's hoſtile plain
Had fall'n ſurrounded with his warlike train;
Or ſafe return'd, the race of glory paſt,
New to his friends embrace, had breath'd his laſt!
Then grateful Greece with ſtreaming eyes would raiſe
Hiſtoric marbles, to record his praiſe;
His praiſe, eternal on the faithful ſtone,
Had with tranſmiſſive honour grac'd his ſon.
Now ſnatch'd by harpies to the dreary coaſt,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory loſt:

℣. 309. *Now ſnatch'd by harpies*, etc.] The meaning of this expreſſion is, that Ulyſſes has not had the rites of ſepulture. This among the ancients was eſteemed the

Vaniſh'd at once! unheard of, and unknown!
And I his heir in miſery alone.
Nor for a dear, loſt father only flow
The filial tears, but woe ſucceeds to woe:
To tempt the ſpouſeleſs queen with am'rous wiles,
Reſort the nobles from the neighb'ring iſles;
From Samos, circled with th' Ionian main,
Dulichium, and Zacynthus' ſylvan reign:
Ev'n with preſumptuous hope her bed t' aſcend,
The lords of Ithaca their right pretend.
She ſeems attentive to their pleaded vows,
Her heart deteſting what her ear allows.

greateſt of calamities, as it hindered the ſhades of the deceaſed from entering into the ſtate of the happy.

℣. 315. *To tempt the ſpouſeleſs queen —reſort the nobles.*] It is neceſſary to reconcile the conduct of the ſuitors to probability, ſince it has ſo great a ſhare in the proceſs of the Odyſſey. It may ſeem incredible that Penelope, who is a queen, in whom the ſupreme power is lodged, ſhould not diſmiſs ſuch unwelcome intruders, eſpecially ſince many of them were her own ſubjects: beſides, it ſeems an extraordinary way of courtſhip in them, to ruin the perſon to whom they make their addreſſes.

To ſolve this objection we muſt conſider the nature of the Grecian governments: the chief men of the land had great authority; though the government was monarchical, it was not deſpotic; Laertes was retired, and diſabled with age; Telemachus was yet in his minority; and the fear of any violence either againſt her own perſon, or againſt her ſon, might deter Penelope from uſing any endeavours to remove men of ſuch inſolence, and ſuch power. Dacier.

They, vain expectants of the bridal hour,
My ſtores in riotous expence devour,
In feaſt and dance the mirthful months employ,
And meditate my doom, to crown their joy.
With tender pity touch'd, the goddeſs cry'd:
Soon may kind heav'n a ſure relief provide,
Soon may your ſire diſcharge the vengeance due,
And all your wrongs the proud oppreſſors rue!
Oh! in that portal ſhould the chief appear,
Each hand tremendous with a brazen ſpear,
In radiant panoply his limbs incas'd;
(For ſo of old my father's court he grac'd,
When ſocial mirth unbent his ſerious ſoul,
O'er the full banquet, and the ſprightly bowl)
He then from Ephyre, the fair domain
Of Ilus ſprung from Jaſon's royal ſtrain,
Meaſur'd a length of ſeas, a toilſome length, in vain.
For voyaging to learn the direful art
To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart;

℣. 341. *To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart.*] It is neceſſary to explain this paſſage. It ſeems at firſt view, as if Ulyſſes had requeſted what a good man could not grant. Ilus, ſays Mentes, denied the poiſon, becauſe he feared the anger of the gods; and the poiſon itſelf is called by Homer Ἀνδροφόνον, as if it were deſigned againſt mankind. Euſtathius defends Ulyſſes variouſly: he intended, ſays he, to employ it againſt beaſts only, that infeſted his country, or in hunting. He aſſigns another reaſon, and ſays that the poet is preparing the way to give an air of probability to the deſtruction of the ſuitors. He poiſons his arrows, that every

Observant of the gods, and sternly just,
Ilus refus'd t' impart the baneful trust:
With friendlier zeal my father's soul was fir'd,
The drugs he knew, and gave the boon desir'd.
Appear'd he now with such heroic port,
As then conspicuous at the Taphian court;
Soon should yon' boasters cease their haughty strife,
Or each attone his guilty love with life.
But of his wish'd return the care resign;
Be future vengeance to the Pow'rs divine.
My sentence hear: with stern distaste avow'd,
To their own districts drive the suitor-croud:
When next the morning warms the purple east,
Convoke the peerage, and the gods attest;
The sorrows of your inmost soul relate;
And form sure plans to save the sinking state.
Should second love a pleasing flame inspire,
And the chaste queen connubial rites require;

wound may be mortal; on this account the poison may be called ἀνδροφόνον; for it is certain in the wars of Troy, poisoned arrows were not in use, for many persons who were wounded recovered; so that of necessity they must be reserved for domestic occasions. From what has been said, we may collect the reason why Anchialus granted the poison to Ulysses, and Ilus denied it; Anchialus was the friend of Ulysses, and knew that he would not employ it to any ill purpose; but Ilus, who was a stranger to him, was afraid lest he should abuse it. Eustathius.

Dismiss'd with honour let her hence repair
To great Icarius, whose paternal care
Will guide her passion, and reward the choice
With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.
Then let this dictate of my love prevail:
Instant, to foreign realms prepare to sail,
To learn your father's fortunes: fame may prove
Or omen'd voice (the messenger of Jove)

℣. 560. *Dismiss'd with honour let her hence repair.*] I will lay before the reader literally what Eustathius observe supon these words. There is a soloecism, says he, in these verses or words, that cannot be reduced to the rules of construction. It should be μήτηρ, not μητέρα ἄψ' ἴτω. How then comes the accusative case to be used instead of the nominative? Mentes, adds he, may be supposed to have intended to have said ἀπόπεμψον, send thy mother away; but considering, in the midst of the sentence, that such advice was not suitable to be given to Telemachus, he checks himself and suppresses ἀπόπεμψον; and no other word immediately occurring, that required an accusative case, he falls into a soloecism.

But perhaps this is more ingenious than true; though Mentes was in haste when he spoke it, Homer was not when he composed it. Might not an error creep into the original by the negligence of a transcriber, who might write μητέρα for μήτηρ? This is the more probable, because the one stands in the verse in every respect as well as the other.

What Eustathius adds is very absurd: he says that Telemachus must observe both the interpretations, either send thy mother away, or let the mother retire. So that the advice was double, send thy mother away if thou dost not love her; but if thou art unwilling to grieve her, let her recess be voluntary.

℣. 367. *Omen'd voice—of Jove.*] There is a difficul-

Propitious to the ſearch. Direct your toil
Through the wide ocean firſt to ſandy Pyle,
Of Neſtor, hoary ſage, his doom demand;
Thence ſpeed your voyage to the Spartan ſtrand,
For young Atrides to th' Achaian coaſt
Arriv'd the laſt of all the victor hoſt.
If yet Ulyſſes views the light, forbear,
Till the fleet hours reſtore the circling year.
But if his ſoul hath wing'd the deſtin'd flight,
Inhabitant of deep diſaſtrous night,
Homeward with pious ſpeed repaſs the main,
To the pale ſhade funereal rites ordain,
Plant the fair column o'er the vacant grave,
A hero's honours let the hero have.
With decent grief the royal dead deplor'd,
For the chaſte queen ſelect an equal lord.
Then let revenge your daring mind employ,
By fraud or force the ſuitor-train deſtroy,
And ſtarting into manhood, ſcorn the boy.

ty in this paſſage. In any caſe of enquiry, any words that were heard by accident were called by the Latins, *omens*; by Homer, *the voice of Jupiter*; and he ſtiles them ſo, becauſe it is through his providence that thoſe words come to our knowlege: κλέος ſignifies *fame* or *rumour*; and the ancients referred all voices or ſounds to Jupiter; and ſtiled him Ζεὺς πανομφαῖος. So that the *voice of Jove* implies any words that we hear by chance, from whence we can draw any thing that gives light to our concerns or enquiries. Dacier. Euſtathius.

Haſt thou not heard how young Oreſtes fir'd
With great revenge, immortal praiſe acquir'd?
His virgin ſword Ægyſthus' veins imbru'd;
The murd'rer fell, and blood atton'd for blood.
O greatly bleſs'd with every blooming grace!
With equal ſteps the paths of glory trace;
Join to that royal youth's, your rival name,
And ſhine eternal in the ſphere of fame,—
But my aſſociates now my ſtay deplore,
Impatient on the hoarſe-reſounding ſhore.
Thou, heedful of advice, ſecure proceed;
My praiſe the precept is, be thine the deed.

The counſel of my friend, the youth rejoin'd,
Imprints conviction on my grateful mind.

℣. 387. *Haſt thou not heard*, etc.] It may ſeem that this example of Oreſtes does not come fully up to the purpoſe intended: there is a wide difference in the circumſtances: Oreſtes ſlew an adulterer, and a ſingle perſon with an adultereſs. The deſigns of Telemachus are not againſt one, but many enemies; neither are they adulterers, nor have they ſlain the father of Telemachus, as is the caſe of Oreſtes: nor is Penelope an adultereſs. The intent therefore of the goddeſs is only to ſhew what a glorious act it is to defend our parents: Oreſtes, ſays Mentes, is every where celebrated for honouring his father, and thou ſhalt obtain equal honour by defending thy mother.

The ſenſe that πατροφόνευς here bears is remarkable, it ſignifies not only a perſon who kills his own father, but who kills the father of any other perſon. Euſtathius.

℣. 413. —*With eagle-ſpeed ſhe cut the ſky,*
Inſtant inviſible——]

I paſs over the ſeveral interpretations that have been

So fathers ſpeak (perſuaſive ſpeech and mild !)
Their ſage experience to the fav'rite child.
But ſince to part, for ſweet refection due
The genial viands let my train renew :
And the rich pledge of plighted faith receive,
Worthy the heir of Ithaca to give.
  Defer the promis'd boon, (the goddeſs cries,
Celeſtial azure brightning in her eyes)
And let me now regain the Reithrian port :
From Temeſe return'd your royal court
I ſhall reviſit ; and that pledge receive,
And gifts, memorial of our friendſhip, leave.
  Abrupt, with eagle-ſpeed ſhe cut the ſky ;
Inſtant inviſible to mortal eye.
Then firſt he recognis'd th' aetherial gueſt ;
Wonder and joy alternate fire his breaſt :
Heroic thoughts infus'd his heart dilate,
Revolving much his father's doubtful fate :
At length compos'd, he join'd the ſuitor-throng,
Huſh'd in attention to the warbled ſong.

given to the word ἀνόπαια ; ſome ſay it implies ſhe flew up the chimney, etc. In reality it ſignifies a ſpecies of an eagle ; but it may alſo ſignify the ſame as ἀφανὴς, *inviſible* ; either of the latter ſenſes are natural, or both together, *like an eagle ſhe diſappeared.* Euſtathius.

ỳ. 420. *Huſh'd in attention to the warbled ſong.*] There may be two reaſons why this is inſerted ; either the ſuitors were pleaſed with the ſweetneſs of the ſong, or the ſubject of it ; they ſat attentive to hear the death of Ulyſſes, in the proceſs of his ſtory. This gives us a reaſon why immediately Penelope deſcended to ſtop

His tender theme the charming lyriſt choſe
Minerva's anger, and the direful woes
Which voyaging from Troy the victors bore,
While ſtorms vindictive intercept the ſhore.
The ſhrilling airs the vaulted roof rebounds,
Reflecting to the queen the ſilver ſounds.

the ſong; ſhe feared leſt he might touch upon the ſtory of Ulyſſes, and ſay that he died in his return. This would have reduced her to the utmoſt neceſſity, and ſhe could not have deferred to marry. Phemius would have certainly found credit, for poets were believed to be inſpired by the gods; they were looked upon as prophets, and to have ſomething of divinity in them, as appears from Demodocus in the 8th book of the Odyſſey. Beſides there was a further neceſſity to put a ſtop to the ſong. If Phemius had declared him to be dead, Penelope could not have avoided marriage; if alive, the ſuitors might have deſi ed, or armed themſelves againſt Ulyſſes, and then their deaths, one of the principal incidents of the poem, could not have followed; neither could Telemachus have gone in ſearch of his father, if he had foreknown his death, or ſudden return. It is therefore artful in the poet to cut the ſong ſhort, he reſerves the ſtory of Ulyſſes for future narration, and brings all this about by a very probable method, by the interpoſition of Penelope, who requeſts that ſome other ſtory may be choſen, a ſtory that ſhe can hear without ſorrow.

It is very cuſtomary for women to be preſent at the entertainments of men; as appears from the conduct of Helen, Arete, Nauſicaa, and Penelope, in divers parts of the Odyſſey: ſhe is here introduced with the greateſt decency; ſhe enters not the room, but ſtands with tears at the threſhold; and even at that diſtance appears with her face ſhaded by a veil. Euſtathius.

With grief renew'd the weeping fair descends;
Their sovereign's step a virgin train attends:
A veil of richest texture wrought, she wears,
And silent to the joyous hall repairs,
There from the portal, with her mild command
Thus gently checks the minstrel's tuneful hand.
  Phemius! let acts of gods and heroes old,
What antient bards in hall and bow'r have told,
Attemper'd to the lyre, your voice employ;
Such the pleas'd ear will drink with silent joy.
But oh! forbear that dear, disastrous name,
To sorrow sacred, and secure of fame:
My bleeding bosom sickens at the sound,
And ev'ry piercing note inflicts a wound.
  Why, dearest object of my duteous love,
(Reply'd the prince) will you the bard reprove?
Oft, Jove's aetherial rays (resistless fire)
The chanter's soul and raptur'd song inspire;

℣. 443. *Oft Jove's aetherial rays*, etc.] Telemachus here reproves his mother for commanding Phemius to desist, or not to make Ulysses the subject of his song; by saying, that it was not in the poet's own power to chuse his subject, which was frequently dictated and inspired by the gods. This is a particular instance of the opinion the antients held as to the immediate inspiration of their poets. The words in the original evidently bear this sense. *If the subject displease you, it is not the poet but Jupiter is to blame, who inspires men of invention, as he himself pleases.* And madam Dacier strangely mistakes this passage, in rendering it, *it is not the poet but Jupiter who is the cause of our misfortunes, for it*

Inſtinct divine! nor blame ſevere his choice,
Warbling the Grecian woes with harp and voice:
For novel lays attract our raviſh'd ears;
But old, the mind with inattention hears.
Patient permit the ſadly-pleaſing ſtrain;
Familiar now with grief, your tears refrain,
And in the public woe forget your own;
You weep not for a periſh'd lord, alone.
What Greeks, now wand'ring in the Stygian gloom,
With your Ulyſſes ſhar'd an equal doom!
Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil
And various labours of the loom, beguile;
There rule, from palace-cares remote and free,
That care to man belongs, and moſt to me.

is he who diſpenſes to wretched mortals good or evil as he pleaſes. At the ſame time ſhe acknowleges the word ἀλφησταὶ, which ſhe here renders *laborious*, or *wretched*, to ſignify *perſons of wit*, in the beginning of lib. 6. and *perſons of ſkill and ability in their art*, in lib. 11.

ỿ. 455. *Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil*, etc.] Theſe verſes are taken literally from the 6th book of the Iliad, except that μῦθος is inſerted inſtead of πόλεμος; Euſtathius explains the paſſage thus: *Women are not forbid intirely to ſpeak, for women are talking animals,* λαλητὸν ζῶον, *they have the faculty of talking, and indeed are rational creatures;* but they muſt *not give too much liberty to that unruly member, in the company of men.* Sophocles adviſes well,

Γύναι, γυναιξὶ κόσμον ἡ σιγὴ φέρει,

O woman, ſilence is the ornament of thy ſex. Madam Dacier, though ſhe plunders almoſt every thing, has ſpared this obſervation.

Mature beyond his years the queen admires
His ſage reply, and with her train retires.
Then ſwelling ſorrows burſt their former bounds,
With echoing grief afreſh the dome reſounds;
Till Pallas piteous of her plaintive cries,
In ſlumber clos'd her ſilver-ſtreaming eyes.

Mean-time rekindled at the royal charms,
Tumultuous love each beating boſom warms;
Intemp'rate rage a wordy war began;
But bold Telemachus aſſum'd the man.
Inſtant, he cry'd, your female diſcord end,
Ye deedleſs boaſters! and the ſong attend:
Obey that ſweet compulſion, nor profane
With diſſonance the ſmooth melodious ſtrain.
Pacific now prolong the jovial feaſt;
But when the dawn reveals the roſy eaſt,
I, to the peers aſſembled, ſhall propoſe
The firm reſolve I here in few diſcloſe,
No longer live the cankers of my court;
All to your ſeveral ſtates with ſpeed reſort;
Waſte in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feaſt; and late carouſe.
But if, to honour loſt, 'tis ſtill decreed
For you my bowl ſhall flow, my flocks ſhall bleed,
Judge and revenge my right, impartial Jove!
By him and all th' immortal thrones above,
(A ſacred oath) each proud oppreſſor ſlain
Shall with inglorious gore this marble ſtain.

Aw'd by the prince, thus haughty, bold, and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, and wonder chain'd the tongue.
Silence at length the gay Antinous broke,
Conſtrain'd a ſmile, and thus ambiguous ſpoke.
What god to your untutor'd youth affords
This headlong torrent of amaſing words?

℣. 491. *The ſpeech of Antinous.*] Antinous and Eurymachus are Ithacenſians, and are called the chief of the ſuitors. It is therefore neceſſary to diſtinguiſh their characters; Antinous is violent, and determined againſt Ulyſſes; Eurymachus more gentle and ſubtile: Antinous derides, Eurymachus flatters.

This ſpeech of Antinous is a concealed railery; he tells Telemachus, that Jove inſpires his ſoul with wiſdom, but means that his education has been ſuch, that he had learned nothing from man; he wiſhes (out of a ſeemingly kind concern for him) that he may never reign in Ithaca, becauſe the weight of a crown is a burthen; and concludes with mentioning his hereditary title to it, to inſinuate that it is his by deſcent only, and not by merit.

Telemachus, in his anſwer, wiſely diſſembles the affront of Antinous, he takes it in the better ſenſe, and ſeems to differ only in opinion about the regality. Think you, ſays he, that to be a king is to be miſerable? To be a king, in my judgment, is to enjoy affluence and honour. He aſſerts his claim to the ſucceſſion of his father, yet ſeems to decline it, to lay the ſuſpicions of the ſuitors aſleep, that they may not prevent the meaſures he takes to obtain it. Euſtathius.

The ſpeech of Eurymachus confirms the former obſervation, that this ſuitor is of a more ſoft and moderate behaviour than Antinous: he cloaths ill deſigns with a ſeeming humanity, and appears a friend, while he carries on the part of an enemy: Telemachus had

May Jove delay thy reign, and cumber late
So bright a genius with the toils of ſtate!
Thoſe toils (Telemachus ſerene replies)
Have charms, with all their weight, to allure the wiſe.
Faſt by the throne obſequious fame reſides,
And wealth inceſſant rolls her golden tides.
Nor let Antinous rage, if ſtrong deſire
Of wealth and fame a youthful boſom fire;
Elect by Jove his delegate of ſway,
With joyous pride the ſummons I'd obey.
Whene'er Ulyſſes roams the realm of night,
Should factious pow'r diſpute my lineal right,
Some other Greeks, a fairer claim may plead;
To your pretence their title would precede.
At leaſt, the ſceptre loſt, I ſtill ſhould reign
Sole o'er my vaſſals, and domeſtic train.
To this Eurymachus. To heav'n alone
Refer the choice to fill the vacant throne.
Your patrimonial ſtores in peace poſſeſs;
Undoubted all your filial claim confeſs:

ſaid, that if it was the will of Jupiter, he would aſcend the throne of Ithaca: Eurymachus anſwers, that this was as the gods ſhould determine; an inſinuation that they regarded not his claim from his father. Telemachus ſaid he would maintain himſelf in the poſſeſſion of his preſent inheritance: Eurymachus wiſhes that no one may arrive to diſpoſſeſs him; the latent meaning of which is, 'we of your own country are ſufficient for 'that deſign.' If theſe obſervations of Euſtathius be true, Eurymachus was not a leſs enemy than Antinous, but a better diſſembler.

Your private right ſhould impious pow'r invade,
The peers of Ithaca would arm in aid.
But ſay, that ſtranger-gueſt who late withdrew,
What and from whence? his name and lineage ſhew.
His grave demeanour, and majeſtic grace
Speak him deſcended of no vulgar race:
Did he ſome loan of antient right require,
Or came fore-runner of your ſcepter'd ſire?
Oh ſon of Polybus! the prince replies,
No more my ſire will glad thoſe longing eyes:
The queen's fond hope inventive rumour cheers,
Or vain diviners' dreams divert her fears.
That ſtranger-gueſt the Taphian realm obeys,
A realm defended with incircling ſeas.
Mentes, an ever-honour'd name, of old
High in Ulyſſes' ſocial liſt inroll'd.
Thus he, though conſcious of th' aetherial gueſt,
Anſwer'd evaſive of the ſly requeſt.
Mean time the lyre rejoins the ſprightly lay;
Love-dittied airs, and dance conclude the day.
But when the ſtar of Eve, with golden light
Adorn'd the matron-brow of ſable night;
The mirthful train diſperſing quit the court,
And to their ſeveral domes to reſt reſort.
A tow'ring ſtructure to the palace join'd;
To this his ſteps the thoughtful prince inclin'd;
In his pavilion there to ſleep repairs;
The lighted torch the ſage Euryclea bears.

ỳ. 540. *The ſage Euryclea.*] Euryclea was a very

(Daughter of Ops, the juſt Piſenor's ſon,
For twenty beeves by great Laertes won;
In roſy prime with charms attractive grac'd,
Honour'd by him, a gentle lord and chaſte,
With dear eſteem: too wiſe, with jealous ſtriſe
To taint the joys of ſweet, connubial life.
Sole with Telemachus her ſervice ends,
A child ſhe nurs'd him, and a man attends.)

aged perſon; ſhe was bought by Laertes to nurſe Ulyſſes; and in her old age attends Telemachus: ſhe coſt Laertes twenty oxen; that is, a certain quantity of money (ὕλης μεταλλικῆς) which would buy twenty oxen: or perhaps the form of an ox was ſtamped upon the metal, and from thence had its appellation.

The ſimplicity of theſe heroic times is remarkable; an old woman is the only attendant upon the ſon of a king: ſhe lights him to his apartment, takes care of his cloths, and hangs them up at the ſide of his bed. Greatneſs then conſiſted not in ſhew, but in the mind: this conduct proceeded not from the meanneſs of poverty, but from the ſimplicity of manners. Euſtathius.

Having now gone through the firſt book, I ſhall only obſerve to the reader, that the whole of it does not take up the compaſs of an intire day: when Minerva appears to Telemachus the ſuitors were preparing to ſit down to the banquet at noon; and the buſineſs of the firſt book concludes with the day. It is true, that the gods hold a debate before the deſcent of Minerva, and ſome ſmall time muſt be allowed for that tranſaction. It is remarkable, that there is not one ſimile in this book, except we allow thoſe three words to be one, ὄρνις δ' ὣς ἀνόπαια; the ſame obſervation is true of the firſt book of the Iliad. See the notes on that place.

Whilst to his couch himself the prince addrest,
The duteous dame receiv'd the purple vest:
The purple vest with decent care dispos'd,
The silver ring she pull'd, the door reclos'd,
The bolt obedient to the silken cord,
To the strong staple's inmost depth restor'd,
Secur'd the valves. There wrapt in silent shade,
Pensive, the rules the goddess gave, he weigh'd;
Stretch'd on the downy fleece, no rest he knows,
And in his raptur'd soul the vision glows.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The council of Ithaca.

Telemachus, in the assembly of the lords of Ithaca, complains of the injustice done him by the suitors, and insists upon their departure from his palace; appealing to the princes, and exciting the people to declare against them. The suitors endeavour to justify their stay, at least till he shall send the queen to the court of Icarius her father; which he refuses. There appears a prodigy of two eagles in the sky, which an augur expounds to the ruin of the suitors. Telemachus then demands a vessel to carry him to Pylos and Sparta, there to enquire of his father's fortunes. Pallas in the shape of Mentor (an antient friend of Ulysses) helps him to a ship, assists him in preparing necessaries for the voyage, and imbarks with him that night; which concludes the second day from the opening of the poem.

The SCENE continues in the palace of Ulysses in Ithaca.

NOW red'ning from the dawn, the morning ray
Glow'd in the front of heav'n, and gave the day.
The youthful hero, with returning light,
Rose anxious from th' inquietudes of night.

This book opens with the first appearance of Telemachus upon the stage of action. And Bossu observes

A royal robe he wore with graceful pride,
A two-edg'd faulchion threaten'd by his ſide,
Embroider'd ſandals glitter'd as he trod,
And forth he mov'd, majeſtic as a god.
Then by his heralds, reſtleſs of delay,
To council calls the peers: the peers obey.
Soon as in ſolemn form th' aſſembly ſate,
From his high dome himſelf deſcends in ſtate.
Bright in his hand a pond'rous javelin ſhin'd;
Two dogs, a faithful guard, attend behind;

the great judgment of the poet, in beginning with the tranſactions of Ithaca in the abſence of Ulyſſes: by this method he ſets the conduct of Telemachus, Penelope, and the ſuitors, in a ſtrong point of light; they all have a large ſhare in the ſtory of the poem, and conſequently ought to have diſtinguiſhing characters. It is as neceſſary in epic poetry, as it is on the theatre, to let us immediately into the character of every perſon whom the poet introduces: this adds perſpicuity to the ſtory, and we immediately grow acquainted with each perſonage, and intereſt ourſelves in the good or ill fortune that attends them through the whole relation.

Telemachus is now about twenty years of age: in the eleventh book, the poet tells us, he was an infant in the arms of his mother when Ulyſſes failed to Troy; that hero was abſent near twenty years, and from hence we may gather the exact age of Telemachus. He is every where deſcribed as a perſon of piety to the gods, of duty to his parents, and as a lover of his country: he is prudent, temperate, and valiant: and the poet well ſets off the importance of this young hero, by giving him the goddeſs of war and wiſdom for his conſtant attendant.

℣. 13. —— *In his hand a pond'rous javelin ſhin'd.*]

Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
And gazing crouds admire him as he moves.

The poet deſcribes Telemachus as if he were marching againſt an enemy, or going to a council of war, rather than to an aſſembly of peers in his own country: two reaſons are aſſigned for this conduct; either this was the common uſage of princes in thoſe times, or Telemachus might look upon the ſuitors as enemies, and conſequently go to council in arms as againſt enemies. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 14. *Two dogs, a faithful friend, attend behind.*] This paſſage has not eſcaped the raillery of the critics; they look upon it as a mean deſcription of a hero and a prince, to give him a brace of dogs only for his guards and attendants: but ſuch was the ſimplicity of antient princes, that except in war they had rarely any attendants or equipage. And we may be confident Homer copies after the cuſtom of the time, unleſs we can be ſo abſurd as to ſuppoſe, he would feign low circumſtances unneceſſarily, through a want of judgment.

Virgil judged otherwiſe, and thought this circumſtance worthy of his imitation.

Quin etiam gemini cuſtodes limine ab alto
Procedunt, greſſumque canes comitantur Herilem.

Achilles is deſcribed in the Iliad with the ſame attendants.

——*nine large dogs domeſtic at his board.* B. 23.

Poetry, obſerves Dacier, is like painting, which draws the greateſt beauties from the ſimpleſt cuſtoms: and even in hiſtory, we receive a ſenſible pleaſure from the leaſt circumſtance that denotes the cuſtoms of antient times. It may be added, that the poet, as well as the painter, is obliged to follow the cuſtoms of the age of which he writes, or paints: a modern dreſs would ill become Achilles or Ulyſſes, ſuch a conduct would be

His father's throne he fill'd: while diſtant ſtood
The hoary peers, and aged wiſdom bow'd.
'Twas ſilence all, at laſt Ægyptius ſpoke;
Ægyptius, by his age and ſorrows broke:
A length of days his ſoul with prudence crown'd,
A length of days had bent him to the ground.
His eldeſt * hope in arms to Ilion came,
By great Ulyſſes taught the path to fame;
But, hapleſs youth, the hideous Cyclops tore
His quiv'ring limbs, and quaff'd his ſpouting gore.
Three ſons remain'd: to climb with haughty fires
The royal bed, Eurynomus aſpires;
The reſt with duteous love his griefs aſſuage,
And eaſe the ſire of half the cares of age.
Yet ſtill his Antiphus he loves, he mourns,
And as he ſtood, he ſpoke and wept by turns.
Since great Ulyſſes ſought the Phrygian plains,
Within theſe walls inglorious ſilence reigns.

* Antiphus.

condemned as an abſurdity in painting, and ought to be ſo in poetry.

ỳ. 31. *Yet ſtill his Antiphus he loves, he mourns.*] Homer, ſays Euſtathius, inſerts theſe particularities concerning the family of Ægyptius, to give an air of truth to his ſtory. It does not appear that Ægyptius knew the certainty of the death of Antiphus: (for it is the poet who relates it, and not the father;) whence, as Dacier obſerves, ſhould he learn it? he only laments him, according to the prevailing opinion that all the companions of Ulyſſes were loſt with Ulyſſes.

ỳ. 33. *Since great Ulyſſes*, etc.] We are here told, that there never had been any council convened in Ithaca,

Say then, ye peers! by whose commands we meet?
Why here once more in solemn council sit?
Ye young, ye old, the weighty cause disclose:
Arrives some message of invading foes?
Or say, does high necessity of state
Inspire some patriot, and demand debate!
The present synod speaks its author wise;
Assist him, Jove! thou regent of the skies!

since the departure of Ulysses. The general design and moral of the Odyssey, is to inform us of the mischievous effects which the absence of a king and father of a family produces: we deprive, as Bossu observes, the poem of its very soul, and spoil the fable, if we retrench from it the disorders which the suitors create in the absence of Ulysses, both in his family and dominions. Nothing can give us a greater image of those disorders, than what is here related: what must a kingdom suffer in twenty years, without a ruler, without a council to make laws or punish enormities? Such is the condition of Ithaca: Laertes is superannuated; Penelope oppressed by the violence of the suitors; and Telemachus to this time, in his minority.

It is very artful in the poet to open the assembly by Ægyptius: Telemachus was the person who convened it; and being the greatest personage present, it might be expected that he should open the design of it: but to give Telemachus courage, who was young and inexperienced, Ægyptius first rises, and by praising the person who had summoned them, of whom he seems ignorant, gives Telemachus to understand he has friends among the assembly: this he could no other way so safely have done, considering the power of the suitors. By this means, Telemachus is encouraged to speak boldly, and arraign the disorders of the suitors with the utmost freedom.

He spoke. Telemachus, with transport glows,
Embrac'd the omen, and majestic rose:
(His royal hand th' imperial sceptre sway'd)
Then thus, addressing to Ægyptius, said.
Rev'rend old man! lo here confest he stands
By whom ye meet; my grief your care demands.
No story I unfold of public woes,
Nor bear advices of impending foes:
Peace the blest land, and joys incessant crown;
Of all this happy realm, I grieve alone.
For my lost sire continual sorrows spring,
The great, the good; your father, and your king.
Yet more; our house from its foundation bows,
Our foes are pow'rful, and your sons the foes:

℣. 54. *Your father, and your king.*] Telemachus here sets the character of Ulysses, as a king, in the most agreeable point of light: he ruled his people with the same mildness as a father rules his children. This must needs have a very happy effect upon the audience; not only as it shews Ulysses to have been a good governour; but as it recalls the memory of the happiness they received from that mild government, and obliquely condemns them of ingratitude who had forgot it. By this method also the poet interests us deeply in the sufferings of Ulysses; we cannot see a good man and good king in distress, without the most tender emotions.

℣. 55. *Yet more—our house*, etc.] What Telemachus here says has give offence to the critics; they think it indecent for a son to say, that he bears with more regret the disorder of his family than the loss of his father; yet this objection will vanish, if we weigh Penelope, Telemachus, and his whole posterity, against the single person of Ulysses.

Hither, unwelcome to the queen they come;
Why ſeek they not the rich Icarian dome?
If ſhe muſt wed, from other hands require
The dowry; is Telemachus her ſire?
Yet through my court the noiſe of revel rings,
And waſtes the wiſe frugality of kings.
Scarce all my herds their luxury ſuffice;
Scarce all my wine their midnight hours ſupplies.

But what chiefly takes away this objection is, that Telemachus was ſtill in hopes of his father's return: for ἀπώλεσα does not imply neceſſarily his death, but abſence: and then both wirh juſtice and decency, Telemachus may ſay that he grieves more for the deſtruction of his family, than for the abſence of Ulyſſes.

℣. 63. *Scarce all my herds their luxury ſuffice.*] This paſſage is ridiculed by the critics; they ſet it in a wrong light, and then grow very pleaſant upon it: Telemachus makes a ſad outcry becauſe the ſuitors eat his ſheep, his beeves and fatted goats; and at laſt falls into tears. The truth is, the riches of kings and princes, in thoſe early ages, conſiſted chiefly in flocks and cattle; thus Æneas and Paris are deſcribed as tending their flocks, etc. and Abraham in the ſcriptures, as abounding in this kind of wealth.

Theſe critics would form a different idea of the ſtate and condition of Telemachus, if they conſidered that he had been capable to maintain no fewer than an hundred and eight perſons in a manner very expenſive for many years; for ſo many, with their attendants, were the ſuitors, as appears from the 16th book; and at the ſame time he kept up the dignity of his own court, and lived with great hoſpitality.

But it is a ſufficient anſwer to the objections againſt this paſſage, to obſerve, that it is not the expence, but

Safe in my youth, in riot ſtill they grow,
Nor in the helpleſs orphan dread a foe.
But come it will, the time when manhood grants
More pow'rful advocates than vain complaints.
Approach that hour! unſufferable wrong
Cries to the gods, and vengeance ſleeps too long.
Riſe then, ye peers! with virtuous anger riſe!
Your fame revere, but moſt th' avenging ſkies.
By all the deathleſs pow'rs that reign above,
By righteous Themis and by thund'ring Jove,
(Themis, who gives to councils, or denies
Succeſs; and humbles, or confirms the wiſe)

manner of it, that Telemachus laments: this he expreſly declares by the word μαψιδίως; and ſurely a ſober man may complain againſt luxury, without being araigned of meanneſs; and againſt profuſion, without being condemned for parſimony.

ỳ. 75. *Themis, who gives to councils, or denies ſucceſs.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that there was a cuſtom to carry the ſtatue of Themis to the aſſemblies in former ages, and carry it back again when thoſe aſſemblies were diſſolved; and thus Themis may be ſaid to form, and diſſolve an aſſembly. Dacier diſlikes this aſſertion, as having no foundation in antiquity; ſhe thinks that the aſſertion of Telemachus is general, that he intimates it is juſtice alone that eſtabliſhes the councils of mankind, and that injuſtice confounds and brings the wicked deſigns of men to confuſion.

I have followed this interpretation, not only as it ſuits beſt with the uſual morality of Homer, but alſo as Jupiter is mentioned with Themis; and no ſuch cuſtom is pretended concerning his ſtatue. He is expreſly ſtiled by the ancients Ζεὺς ἀγοραῖος. In Sicily there was an

Riſe in my aid! ſuffice the tears that flow
For my loſt ſire, nor add new woe to woe.
If e'er he bore the ſword to ſtrengthen ill,
Or having pow'r to wrong, betray'd the will,
On me, on me your kindled wrath aſſuage,
And bid the voice of lawleſs riot rage.
If ruin to our royal race ye doom,
Be you the ſpoilers, and our wealth conſume.
Then might we hope redreſs from juſter laws,
And raiſe all Ithaca to aid our cauſe:
But while your ſons commit th' unpuniſh'd wrong,
You make the arm of violence too ſtrong.

While thus he ſpoke, with rage and grief he frown'd,
And daſh'd th' imperial ſceptre to the ground.
The big round tear hung trembling in his eye:
The ſynod griev'd, and gave a pitying ſigh,

altar of Ζεὺς ἀγοραῖος, or of *Jupiter who preſides over councils*. Euſtathius from Herodotus.

℣. 84. *Be you the ſpoilers, and our wealth conſume.*] To underſtand this paſſage, we muſt remember, as Euſtathius remarks, that Telemachus is pleading his cauſe before the Ithacenſians; them he conſtitutes the judges of his cauſe: he therefore prevents an anſwer which they might make, viz. *We are not the men that are guilty of theſe outrages;* Telemachus rejoins, 'It were better for me to ſuffer from your hands; for by your quieſcence you make my affairs deſperate:' an intimation that they ſhould riſe in his defence.

℣. 91. *The big round tear hung trembling in his eye.*] This paſſage is not one of thoſe, where the poet can be blamed for the cauſing a hero to weep. If we conſider the youth of Telemachus, together with the ten-

Then ſilent ſat——at length Antinous burns
With haughty rage, and ſternly thus returns.
O inſolence of youth! whoſe tongue affords
Such railing eloquence, and war of words.
Studious thy country's worthies to defame,
Thy erring voice diſplays thy mother's ſhame.
Eluſive of the bridal day, ſhe gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.

derneſs agreeable to that time of life; the ſubjects that demand his concern; the apprehenſion of the loſs of a father; and the deſolate ſtate of his mother and kingdom: all theſe make his readineſs to burſt into tears an argument, not of any want of ſpirit in him, but of true ſenſe, and goodneſs of nature; and is a great propriety, which ſhews the right judgment of the poet.

ý. 95. *Oh inſolence of yoath, etc.*] We find Antinous always ſetting himſelf in the ſtrongeſt oppoſition to Telemachus; and therefore, he is the firſt that falls by the ſpear of Ulyſſes; the poet obſerves juſtice, and as Antinous is the firſt in guilt, he is the firſt in puniſhment. What Antinous ſays in this ſpeech concerning the treachery of the female ſervant of Penelope, prepares the way for the puniſhment Ulyſſes inflicts on ſome of the maids in the concluſion of the poem: this is an act of poetical juſtice; and it is as neceſſary in epic as in tragic poetry, to reward the juſt, and puniſh the guilty. Euſtathius.

ý. 99. *Eluſive of the bridal day, ſhe gives*
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.]
It will be neceſſary to vindicate the character of Penelope, the heroine of the poem, from the aſperſions of Antinous. It muſt be confeſt that ſhe has a very hard game to play, ſhe neither dares conſent, nor deny; if

Did not the ſun, through heav'ns wide azure roll'd,
For three long years the royal fraud behold?
While ſhe, laborious in deluſion, ſpread
The ſpacious loom, and mix'd the various thread:
Where as to life the wond'rous figures riſe,
Thus ſpoke th' inventive queen, with artful ſighs.
'Though cold in death Ulyſſes breathes no more,
'Ceaſe yet a while to urge the bridal hour;

ſhe conſents, ſhe injures Ulyſſes, whom ſhe ſtill expects to return; if ſhe denies, ſhe indangers the throne, and the life of Telemachus, from the violence of the ſuitors; ſo that no other method is left but to elude their addreſſes.

I muſt not conceal what Euſtathius has mentioned from ſome authors, as Lycophron, etc. who ſay that Penelope was κασσωρίδα, in plain Engliſh, *an harlot;* and he quotes Herodotus, as affirming that ſhe had a ſon, named Pan, by Hermes; but the biſhop declares it is all a ſcandal; and every body muſt conclude the ſame, from her conduct, as deſcribed in Homer.

To vindicate her in this place, we muſt conſider who it is that ſpeaks: Antinous, an unſucceſsful lover: and what he blames as a crime, is really her glory; he blames her becauſe ſhe does not comply with their deſires; and it had been an act of guilt to have complied. He himſelf ſufficiently vindicates her in the concluſion of his ſpeech, where he extols her above all the race of womankind: ſo that the ſeeming inconſiſtence of Penelope muſt be imputed to the neceſſity of her affairs: ſhe is artful, but not criminal.

The original ſays, ſhe deceived the ſuitors by her meſſages; a plain intimation, that ſhe uſed no extraordinary familiarities with her admirers; and through the whole courſe of the poem ſhe ſeldom appears in their aſſemblies.

'Cease, till to great Laertes I bequeath
'A task of grief, his ornaments of death:
'Lest when the fates his royal ashes claim,
'The Grecian matrons taint my spotless fame;
'When he, whom living mighty realms obey'd,
'Shall want in death a shroud to grace his shade.'
Thus she: at once the gen'rous train complies,
Nor fraud mistrusts in virtue's fair disguise.
The work she ply'd; but studious of delay,
By night revers'd the labours of the day.
While thrice the sun his annual journey made,
The conscious lamp the midnight fraud survey'd;
Unhear'd, unseen, three years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid unfolds th' amazing tale.
We saw, as unperceiv'd we took our stand,
The backward labours of her faithless hand.

ỳ. 109. *Cease, till to great Laertes I bequeath*
A task of grief, his ornaments of death.]
It was an antient custom to dedicate the finest pieces of weaving and embroidery, to honour the funerals of the dead: and these were usually wrought by the nearest relations in their life-time. Thus in the 22d Iliad, Andromache laments, that the body of Hector must be exposed to the air, without those ornaments.

——— ἀτάρ τοι εἵματ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι κέονται,
Λεπτά τε καὶ χαρίεντα, τετυγμένα χερσὶ γυναικῶν.

And the mother of Euryalus in Virgil, to her son.

——— *Nec te tua funera mater*
Produxi, pressive oculos, aut vulnera lavi,
Veste tegens, tibi quam noctes festina diesque
Urgebam, et tela curas solabar aniles.

Then urg'd, ſhe perfects her illuſtrious toils;
A wond'rous monument of female wiles!

But you, oh peers! and thou, oh prince! give ear:
(I ſpeak aloud, that every Greek may hear)
Diſmiſs the queen; and if her ſire approves,
Let him eſpouſe her to the peer ſhe loves:
Bid inſtant to prepare the bridal train,
Nor let a race of princes wait in vain.
Though with a grace divine her ſoul is bleſt,
And all Minerva breathes within her breaſt,
In wond'rous arts than woman more renown'd,
And more than woman with deep wiſdom crown'd;
Though Tyro nor Mycene match her name,
Nor great Alcmena, the proud boaſts of fame,
Yet thus by heav'n adorn'd, by heav'n's decree
She ſhines with fatal excellence, to thee:
With thee, the bowl we drain, indulge the feaſt,
Till righteous heav'n reclaim her ſtubborn breaſt.
What though from pole to pole reſounds her name!
The ſon's deſtruction waits the mother's fame:
For till ſhe leaves thy court, it is decreed,
Thy bowl to empty, and thy flock to bleed.

V. 140. *She ſhines with fatal excellence, to thee.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that Antinous, in the opening of his ſpeech, throws the fault upon Penelope, to engage the favour of the multitude: but being conſcious that he had ſaid things which Penelope would reſent, he extols her in the concluſion of it. He aſcribes an obſtinacy of virtue to her, and by this double conduct endeavours to make both Penelope and the multitude his friends.

While yet he ſpeaks, Telemachus replies,
Ev'n nature ſtarts, and what ye aſk denies.

℣. 147. *Telemachus's reply.*] Telemachus every where ſpeaks with an openneſs and bravery of ſpirit; this ſpeech is a teſtimony of it, as well as his former; he anſwers chiefly to the diſmiſſion of Penelope, ſays it would be an offence againſt heaven and earth; and concludes with a vehemence of expreſſion, and tells Antinous that ſuch a word, μῦθον, ſhall never fall from his tongue.

The critics have found fault with one part of the ſpeech, as betraying a ſpirit of avarice and meanneſs in Telemachus:

How to Icarius, in the bridal hour,
Shall I, by waſte undone, refund the dow'r?

They think it unworthy of Telemachus to make the dower of Penelope an argument againſt her diſmiſſion, and conſequently aſcribe his detention of her, not to duty, but to covetouſneſs. To take away this objection, they point the verſes in a different manner, and place a ſtop after ἀποτίνειν, and then the ſenſe runs thus: 'I cannot conſent to diſmiſs her who bore me, and nurſed me in my infancy, while her huſband is abſent, or 'perhaps dead; beſides, hard would be the puniſhment 'I ſhould ſuffer, if I ſhould voluntarily ſend away Penelope to Icarius.'

Dacier diſlikes this ſolution, and appeals to the cuſtoms of thoſe ages, to juſtify her opinion: if a ſon forced away his mother from his houſe, he was obliged to reſtore her dower, and all ſhe brought in marriage to her huſband: but if ſhe retired voluntarily to engage in a ſecond marriage, the dower remained with the ſon as lawful heir. This opinion of Dacier may be confirmed from Demoſthenes in his orations, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς τελευτήσαντος, ἀπολιποῦσα τὸν οἶκον, καὶ κομισαμένη τὴν προῖκα. *Afterwards upon the de-*

Thus, ſhall I thus repay a mother's cares,
Who gave me life, and nurs'd my infant years?
While ſad on foreign ſhores Ulyſſes treads,
Or glides a ghoſt with unapparent ſhades,
How to Icarius in the bridal hour
Shall I, by waſte undone, refund the dow'r?
How from my father ſhould I vengeance dread?
How would my mother curſe my hated head?

ceaſe of her husband, leaving his family, and receiving back her portion, etc. The ſame author adds, that the reaſon why the ſuitors are ſo urgent to ſend away Penelope, is that ſhe may chuſe to marry ſome one of them, rather than return to Icarius; ſo that Telemachus only takes hold of their argument for her diſmiſſion, in order to detain her. They addreſſed Penelope more for the ſake of her riches than her beauty, (for ſhe muſt be about forty years old) and he tells them, that if he ſends her away againſt her conſent, he muſt reſtore thoſe riches, which they covet more than the perſon of Penelope. This I confeſs is very refined; and perhaps it may be ſufficient to take off the objection of covetouſneſs in Telemachus, to underſtand no more than what the words at the firſt view ſeem to imply, viz. an abhorrence of their riots, deſcribed by Telemachus to have riſen to ſuch a degree as to have almoſt ruined his kingdom, and made their demands impoſſible. I ſee nothing unnatural or mean in this interpretation, eſpecially if we remember, that the prodigious diſorders of his family enter into the eſſence of the poem. The greater the diſorders are, the greater are the ſufferings of Ulyſſes.

℣. 155. *How from my father ſhould I vengeance dread?*] There is an ambiguity in the word *father*; it may either ſignify Icarius or Ulyſſes, as Euſtathius obſerves: but I think the context determines the perſon to be Ulyſſes;

And while in wrath to vengeful fiends ſhe cries,
How from her hell would vengeful fiends ariſe?
Abhorr'd by all, accurs'd my name would grow,
The earth's diſgrace, and humankind my foe.
If this diſpleaſe, why urge ye here your ſtay?
Haſte from the court, ye ſpoilers, haſte away:

for Telemachus believes him to be yet living, and conſequently might fear his vengeance, if he offered any indignity to Penelope.

ỽ. 157. *And while in wrath to vengeful fiends ſhe cries.*
How from their hell would vengeful fiends ariſe?] In the ninth Iliad we are told that the father of Phoenix imprecated the furies againſt his ſon,

My ſire with curſes loads my hated head,
And cries, 'Ye furies! barren be his bed.
Infernal Jove, the vengeful fiends below,
And ruthleſs Proſerpine, confirm'd his vow.

In the ſame book the furies hear the curſes of Althea upon her ſon,

She beat the ground, and call'd the pow'rs beneath,
On her own ſon to wreak her brother's death.
Hell heard her curſes from the realms profound,
And the fell fiends who walk the nightly round.

Theſe paſſages ſhew the opinion the ancients had of the honour due from children to parents, to be ſuch, that they believed there were furies particularly commiſſioned to puniſh thoſe who failed in that reſpect, and to fulfil the imprecations made againſt them by their offended parents. There is a greatneſs in this idea, and it muſt have had an effect upon the obedience of the youth. We ſee Telemachus is full of the ſenſe of it. Dacier.

Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feast, and late carouse.
But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed
For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed;
Judge and assert my right, impartial Jove!
By him, and all th' immortal host above,
(A sacred oath) if heav'n the pow'r supply,
Vengeance I vow, and for your wrongs ye die.
With that, two eagles from a mountain's height
By Jove's command direct their rapid flight;

℣. 171. etc. *The prodigy of the two eagles.*] This prodigy is usher'd in very magnificently, and the verses are lofty and sonorous. The eagles are Ulysses and Telemachus: *By Jove's command they fly from a mountain's height*: this denotes that the two heroes are inspired by Jupiter, and come from the country to the destruction of the suitors: the eagles fly *with wing to wing conjoin'd*; this shews, that they act in concert, and unity of councils: at first they *float upon the wind*; this implies the calmness and secresy of the approach of those heroes: at last they *clang their wings, and hovering beat the skies*; this shews the violence of the assault: *With ardent eyes the rival train they threat*: this, as the poet himself interprets it, denotes the approaching fate of the suitors. *Then sailing over the domes and towers they fly, Full toward the east*; this signifies that the suitors alone are not doomed to destruction, but that the men of Ithaca are involved in danger, as Halitherses interprets it.

Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
We, and our guilty Ithaca must bleed.

See here the natural explication of this prodigy, which is very ingenious! Eustathius, *verbatim*.

Swift they deſcend, with wing to wing conjoin'd,
Stretch their broad plumes, and float upon the wind.
Above th' aſſembled peers they wheel on high,
And clang their wings, and hovering beat the ſky;
With ardent eyes the rival train they threat,
And ſhrieking loud, denounce approaching fate.
They cuff, they tear; their cheeks and necks they rend,
And from their plumes huge drops of blood deſcend:
Then ſailing o'er the domes and tow'rs they fly,
Full tow'rd the eaſt, and mount into the ſky.

The wond'ring rivals gaze with cares oppreſt,
And chilling horrours freeze in every breaſt.
Till big with knowlege of approaching woes
The prince of augurs, Halitherſes, roſe:
Preſcient he view'd th' aerial tracts, and drew
A ſure preſage from ev'ry wing that flew.

Ye ſons, he cry'd, of Ithaca, give ear,
Hear all! but chiefly you, oh rivals! hear.
Deſtruction ſure o'er all your heads impends;
Ulyſſes comes, and death his ſteps attends.
Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
We, and our guilty Ithaca muſt bleed.
Why ceaſe we then the wrath of heav'n to ſtay?
Be humbled all, and lead, ye great! the way.
For lo! my words no fancy'd woes relate:
I ſpeak from ſcience, and the voice is fate.

When great Ulyſſes ſought the Phrygian ſhores
To ſhake with war proud Ilion's lofty tow'rs,

Deeds then undone my faithful tongue foretold;
Heav'n seal'd my words, and you those deeds behold.
I see (I cry'd) his woes, a countless train;
I see his friends o'erwhelm'd beneath the main:
How twice ten years from shore to shore he roams;
Now twice ten years are past, and now he comes! 206
To whom Eurymachus —— Fly dotard, fly!
With thy wise dreams, and fables of the sky.

ỳ. 203. *I see (I cry'd) his woes* ——
I see his friends o'erwhelm'd, etc.] In three lines, observes Eustathius, the poet gives us the whole Odyssey in miniature: and it is wonderful to think, that so plain a subject should produce such variety in the process of it. Aristotle observes the simplicity of Homer's platform; which is no more than this: a prince is absent from his country; Neptune destroys his companions; in his absence his family is disordered by many princes that address his wife, and plot against the life of his only son, but at last, after many storms, he returns, punishes the suitors, and re-establishes his affairs: this is all that is essential to the poem, the rest of it is made up of episodes. And yet with what miracles of poetry (*speciosa miracula*, as Horace stiles them,) has he furnished out his poem!

ỳ. 207. *The speech of Eurymachus.*] It has been observed, that Homer is the father of oratory as well as poetry; and it must be confessed, that there is not any one branch of it that is not to be found in his poetry. The invective, persuasive, ironical, etc. may all be gathered from it. Nothing can be better adapted to the purpose than this speech of Eurymachus: he is to decry the credit of the predictions of Halitherses: he derides, he threats, and describes him as a venal prophet. He is speaking to the multitude, and endeavours

Go prophesy at home; thy ſons adviſe:
Here thou art ſage in vain—I better read the ſkies.
Unnumber'd birds glide through the aerial way,
Vagrants of air, and unforeboding ſtray.
Cold in the tomb, or in the deeps below
Ulyſſes lies: oh wert thou laid as low!
Then would that buſy head no broils ſuggeſt,
Nor fire to rage Telemachus's breaſt.
From him ſome bribe thy venal tongue requires,
And int'reſt, not the god, thy voice inſpires.
His guide-leſs youth, if thy experienc'd age
Miſlead fallacious into idle rage,
Vengeance deſerv'd thy malice ſhall repreſs,
And but augment the wrongs thou would'ſt redreſs.
Telemachus may bid the queen repair
To great Icarius, whoſe paternal care
Will guide her paſſion, and reward her choice,
With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.
Till ſhe retires, determin'd we remain,
And both the prince and augur threat in vain:
His pride of words, and thy wild dream of fate,
Move not the brave, or only move their hate.
Threat on, oh prince! elude the bridal day,
Threat on, till all thy ſtores in waſte decay.
True, Greece affords a train of lovely dames,
In wealth and beauty worthy of our flames:

to bring Halitherſes into contempt, and in order to it he uſes him contemptuouſly.

But never from this nobler ſuit we ceaſe;
For wealth and beauty leſs than virtue pleaſe.
 To whom the youth. Since then in vain I tell
My num'rous woes, in ſilence let them dwell.
But heav'n, and all the Greeks, have heard my wrongs:
To heav'n, and all the Greeks, redreſs belongs.
Yet this I aſk (nor be it aſk'd in vain)
A bark to waſt me o'er the rolling main;
The realms of Pyle and Sparta to explore,
And ſeek my royal ſire from ſhore to ſhore:
If, or to fame his doubtful fate be known,
Or to be learn'd from Oracles alone?
If yet he lives, with patience I forbear
Till the fleet hours reſtore the circling year;

℣. 239. —— *all the Greeks have heard my wrongs.*] It is neceſſary for the reader to carry in his mind, that this aſſembly conſiſts not only of the peers, but of the people of Ithaca: for to the people Telemachus here appeals.

It is evident, that the place of the aſſembly was at leaſt open to the air in the upper parts: for otherways how ſhould the eagles be viſible to the ſuitors? and ſo very plainly as to be diſcovered to threat them with their eyes? There was, no doubt, a place ſet apart for council, uſually in the market: for Telemachus is ſaid to ſeat himſelf in his father's throne, in the beginning of this book: but Ulyſſes had been abſent twenty years; and therefore it is evident, that his throne had ſtood in the ſame place for the ſpace of twenty years. It is paſt contradiction, that in Athens and other cities of Greece there were Βουλευτήρια, public halls for the conſultation of affairs.

But if already wand'ring in the train
Of empty ſhades, I meaſure back the main;
Plant the fair column o'er the mighty dead,
And yield his conſort to the nuptial bed.
He ceas'd; and while abaſh'd the peers attend,
Mentor aroſe, Ulyſſes' faithful friend:
[When fierce in arms he ſought the ſcenes of war,
'My friend, he cry'd, my palace be thy care;
'Years roll'd on years my god-like ſire decay,
'Guard thou his age, and his beheſts obey.']

ℽ. 254. *Mentor aroſe, Ulyſſes' faithful friend.*] The name of Mentor is another inſtance of the gratitude of our poet's temper, it being the ſame which belonged to a friend of his by whom he was entertained in Ithaca, during a defluxion on his eyes which ſeized him in his voyages; and at whoſe houſe he is ſaid to have laid the plan of his poem. This character of Mentor is well ſuſtained by his ſpeech, and by the aſſiſtance he gratefully gives to young Telemachus on all occaſions.

ℽ. 258. *Guard thou my ſire, and his beheſts obey.*] The original ſays only, *Obey the old man.* Euſtathius rightly determines, that the expreſſion means Laertes. The poet loſes no opportunity of giving Ulyſſes an excellent character; this is as neceſſary as continually to repeat the diſorders of the ſuitors.

——————*Servetur ad imum*
Qualis ab incoepto proceſſerit, et ſibi conſtet.

This conduct contributes admirably to the deſign of the poem; and when the poet, in the unravelling of his fable, comes to reward and puniſh the chief actors, we acknowlege his juſtice in the death of the ſuitors, and re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes.

Stern as he roſe, he caſt his eyes around
That flaſh'd with rage; and as he ſpoke, he frown'd.
O never, never more! let king be juſt,
Be mild in pow'r, or faithful to his truſt!
Let tyrants govern with an iron rod,
Oppreſs, deſtroy, and be the ſcourge of god;
Since he who like a father held his reign,
So ſoon forgot, was juſt and mild in vain!
True, while my friend is griev'd, his griefs I ſhare;
Yet now the rivals are my ſmalleſt care:
They, for the mighty miſchiefs they deviſe,
Ere long ſhall pay—their forfeit lives the price.
But againſt you, ye Greeks! ye coward train,
Gods! how my ſoul is mov'd with juſt diſdain!
Dumb ye all ſtand, and not one tongue affords
His injur'd prince the little aid of words.
While yet he ſpoke, Leocritus rejoin'd:
O pride of words, and arrogance of mind!
Would'ſt thou to riſe in arms the Greeks adviſe?
Join all your pow'rs! in arms, ye Greeks, ariſe!
Yet would your pow'rs in vain our ſtrength oppoſe;
The valiant few o'ermatch an hoſt of foes.
Should great Ulyſſes ſtern appear in arms,
While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms;

℣. 282. *While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms.*] The original is not without obſcurity: it ſays, περὶ Δαιτὶ: or, *in the time of the banquet.* Euſtathius interprets it, τοῦ οἴνου στρατηγοῦντος αὐτοῖς, *The wine as it were fighting on their ſide;* and this agrees with what follows.

Though to his breaſt his ſpouſe with tranſport flies,
Torn from her breaſt, that hour, Ulyſſes dies.
But hence retreating to your domes repair;
To arm the veſſel, Mentor! be thy care,
And Halitherſes! thine: be each his friend:
Ye lov'd the father: go, the ſon attend.
But yet, I truſt, the boaſter means to ſtay
Safe in the court, nor tempt the wat'ry way.
Then with a ruſhing ſound, th' aſſembly bend
Diverſe their ſteps: the rival rout aſcend

The deſign of this ſpeech is to deter the people of Ithaca from riſing in the cauſe of Ulyſſes: Mentor ſpeaks juſtly; Leocritus inſolently: Mentor ſets before them the worth of Ulyſſes; Leocritus the power of the ſuitors: Mentor ſpeaks like a brave man; Leocritus, obſerves Euſtathius, like a coward, who, wanting true courage, flies to the aſſiſtance of wine to raiſe a falſe one.

Perhaps it may be objected, that there is not a ſufficient diſtinction in the characters of the ſeveral ſuitors: they are all deſcribed as inſolent voluptuaries. But though they agree in this general character, yet there is ſomething diſtinguiſhing in the particular perſons: thus Antinous derides, Eurymachus covers villany with mildneſs: Antinous is ever the foremoſt in outrage, Eurymachus generally his ſecond: a greater diſtinction is neither neceſſary, nor poſſible to be repreſented. What the poet is to deſcribe, is the inſolence of the ſuitors, and the diſorders they create in his family and kingdom; he is obliged to dwell upon theſe circumſtances, becauſe they are eſſential to his deſign: and conſequently that general reſemblance of their characters, is not a fault in the poet.

ŷ. 291. *Then, with a ruſhing ſound*, etc.] The aſſembly, which was convened by Telemachus, is broke

The royal dome; while ſad the prince explores
The neighb'ring main, and ſorrowing treads the ſhores.
There, as the waters o'er his hands he ſhed,
The royal ſuppliant to Minerva pray'd.

O goddeſs! who deſcending from the ſkies
Vouchſaf'd thy preſence to my wond'ring eyes,
By whoſe commands the raging deeps I trace,
And ſeek my ſire through ſtorms and rolling ſeas!
Hear from thy heav'ns above, oh warrior maid!
Deſcend once more, propitious to my aid.
Without thy preſence vain is thy command;
Greece, and the rival train thy voice withſtand.

Indulgent to his pray'r, the goddeſs took
Sage Mentor's form, and thus like Mentor ſpoke.

O prince, in early youth divinely wiſe,
Born the Ulyſſes of thy age to riſe!

up in a riotous manner by Leocritus, who had no right to diſſolve it. This agrees with the lawleſs ſtate of the country in the abſence of its king, and ſhews, ſays Euſtathius, that the ſuitors had uſurped the chief authority.

There is a fine contraſte between the behaviour of Telemachus and that of the ſuitors. They return to repeat their diſorders and debauches; Telemachus retires to ſupplicate the goddeſs of wiſdom, to aſſiſt him in his enterprizes. Thus the poet raiſes the character of Telemachus; he has ſhewed him to be a youth of a brave ſpirit, a good ſpeaker, and here repreſents him as a perſon of piety.

ỳ. 307. *The ſpeech of Minerva.*] This ſpeech of Minerva is ſuited to encourage a young man to imitate the virtue of his father, and not to ſuffer himſelf to be overcome by any appearance of difficulties. She ſets

If to the ſon the father's worth deſcends,
O'er the wide waves ſucceſs thy ways attends:
To tread the walks of death he ſtood prepar'd,
And what he greatly thought he nobly dar'd
Were not wiſe ſons deſcendant of the wiſe,
And did not heroes from great heroes riſe,
Vain were my hopes: few ſons attain the praiſe
Of their great ſires, and moſt their ſires diſgrace.
But ſince thy veins paternal virtue fires,
And all Penelope thy ſoul inſpires,
Go, and ſucceed! the rival aims deſpiſe:
For never, never, wicked man was wiſe.
Blind they rejoice, though now, ev'n now they fall;
Death haſtes amain: one hour o'erwhelms them all!
And lo, with ſpeed we plow the wat'ry way;
My pow'r ſhall guard thee, and my hand convey:
The winged veſſel ſtudious I prepare,
Through ſeas and realms companion of thy care.
Thou to the court aſcend; and to the ſhores
(When night advances) bear the naval ſtores;
Bread, that decaying man with ſtrength ſupplies,
And gen'rous wine, which thoughtful ſorrow flies.
Mean while the mariners by my command
Shall ſpeed aboard, a valiant choſen band.

his father before his eyes, and tells him, there was never any danger which he durſt not encounter; if he ſhould ſuffer himſelf to be diſcouraged, he would prove himſelf an unworthy ſon of a brave father. Dacier. Euſtathius.

Wide o'er the bay, by veſſel veſſel rides;
The beſt I chuſe, to waft thee o'er the tides.

She ſpoke: to his high dome the prince returns,
And as he moves, with royal anguiſh mourns.
'Twas riot all, among the lawleſs train;
Boar bled by boar, and goat by goat lay ſlain.
Arriv'd, his hand the gay Antinous preſt,
And thus deriding, with a ſmile addreſt.

Grieve not, oh daring prince! that noble heart:
Ill ſuits gay youth the ſtern heroic part.
Indulge the genial hour, unbend thy ſoul,
Leave thought to age, and drain the flowing bowl.

ℽ. 341. *Antinous's ſpeech.*] This ſpeech muſt be underſtood ironically: ἔργον τε ἔπος τε is uſed as before, and has relation to the preceding harangues of Telemachus to the people, and his intended voyage; by way of deriſion Antinous bids him not trouble his brave ſpirit in contriving any more orations, or in any bold attempt to find out Ulyſſes; or to act the orator, or hero's part.

The critics have almoſt generally condemned theſe pieces of gaiety and raillery, as unworthy of heroic poetry: if ever they are proper, they muſt be ſo in the mouths of theſe ſuitors; perſons of no ſerious, or noble characters: mirth, wine, and feaſting is their conſtant employment; and conſequently if they fall into abſurdities, they act ſuitably to their characters. Milton, the beſt and greateſt imitator of Homer, has followed him unworthily in this reſpect; I mean, has debaſed even this low raillery into greater lowneſs, by playing upon words and ſyllables. But in this place the raillery is not without its effect, by ſhewing the utmoſt contempt of Telemachus; and ſurely it is the loweſt degree of calamity to be at once oppreſſed and deſpiſed.

Studious to eaſe thy grief, our care provides
The bark, to waft thee o'er the ſwelling tides.
   Is this, returns the prince, for mirth a time?
When lawleſs gluttons riot, mirth's a crime;
The luſcious wines diſhonour'd loſe their taſte,
The ſong is noiſe, and impious is the feaſt.
Suffice it to have ſpent with ſwift decay
The wealth of kings, and made my youth a prey,
But now the wiſe inſtructions of the ſage,
And manly thoughts inſpir'd by manly age,
Teach me to ſeek redreſs for all my woe,
Here, or in Pyle.—in Pyle or here, your foe.
Deny your veſſels, ye deny in vain;
A private voyager I paſs the main.
Free breathe the winds, and free the billows flow,
And where on earth I live, I live your foe.
   He ſpoke and frown'd, nor longer deign'd to ſtay,
Sternly his hand withdrew, and ſtrode away.
   Mean time, o'er all the dome, they quaff, they feaſt,
Deriſive taunts were ſpread from gueſt to gueſt,
And each in jovial mood his mate addreſt.
   Tremble ye not, oh friends! and coward fly,
Doom'd by the ſtern Telemachus to dye?
To Pyle or Sparta to demand ſupplies,
Big with revenge, the mighty warrior flies:

℣. 368. *To Pyle or Sparta to demand ſupplies.*] It is obſervable, ſays Euſtathius, that the poet had in his choice ſeveral expedients to bring about the deſtruction of the ſuitors, but he rejects them, and chuſes the moſt

Or comes from Ephyre with poiſons fraught,
And kills us all in one tremendous draught?
  Or who can ſay, his gameſome mate replies,
But while the dangers of the deep he tries,
He, like his ſire, may ſink depriv'd of breath,
And puniſh us unkindly by his death?
What mighty labours would he then create,
To ſeize his treaſures, and divide his ſtate,
The royal palace to the queen convey,
Or him ſhe bleſſes in the bridal day!

difficult method, out of reverence to truth, being unwilling to falſify the hiſtories of Sparta and Pylos. This has a double effect; it furniſhes the poet with a ſeries of noble incidents; and alſo gives an air of probability to the ſtory of Ulyſſes and Telemachus.

℣. 378. *The royal palace to the queen convey.*] The ſuitors allot the palace to Penelope: it being, ſays Euſtathius, the only thing that they cannot conſume; and adds, that the expreſſion of the ſuitors concerning the labour they ſhould undergo in dividing the ſubſtance of Ulyſſes, ſhews the wealth and abundance of that heroe. Dacier has found out an alluſion between φόνον in the firſt ſpeech, and πόνον in the ſecond; they differing only in one letter: ſhe calls this a beauty, which ſhe laments ſhe cannot preſerve in her tranſlation. She is the only commentator that ever was quick-ſighted enough to make the diſcovery. The words have no relation; they ſtand at a ſufficient diſtance; and I believe Homer would have thought ſuch trifling unworthy of his poetry. So that all the honour which accrues from that obſervation muſt be aſcribed (in this caſe, as in many others) to the commentator, and not the author.

Mean time the lofty rooms the prince ſurveys,
Where lay the treaſures of th' Ithacian race:
Here ruddy braſs and gold refulgent blaz'd;
There poliſh'd cheſts embroider'd veſtures grac'd;
Here jars of oil breath'd from a rich perfume;
There caſks of wine in rows adorn'd the dome.

ỳ. 381. *Where lay the treaſures of th' Ithacian race.*] Such paſſages as theſe have ever furniſhed critics with matter of raillery: they think ſuch houſhold cares unworthy of a king, and that this conduct ſuits better with vulgar perſons of leſs fortune. I confeſs, ſuch deſcriptions now would be ridiculous in a poet, becauſe unſuitable to our manners. But if we look upon ſuch paſſages as pictures and exact repreſentations of the old world, the reader will find a ſenſible pleaſure in them.

It is a true obſervation, that the Iliad is chiefly ſuitable to the condition of kings and heroes; and conſequently filled with circumſtances in which the greateſt part of mankind can have no concern or intereſt: the Odyſſey is of more general uſe; the ſtory of it is a ſeries of calamities, which concern every man, as every man may feel them. We can bring the ſufferings of Ulyſſes in ſome degree home to ourſelves, and make his condition our own; but what private perſon can ever be in the circumſtances of Agamemnon or Achilles? What I would infer from this is, that the reader ought not to take offence at any ſuch deſcriptions, which are only mean as they differ from the faſhions of the later ages. In the Iliad, Achilles, when he acts in the common offices of life, and not as an hero, is liable to the ſame objection. But if the manners of the antient ages be conſidered, we ſhall be reconciled to the actions of the antient heroes; and conſequently to Homer.

(Pure flav'rous wine, by gods in bounty giv'n,
And worthy to exalt the feaſts of heav'n.)
Untouch'd they ſtood, till his long labours o'er
The great Ulyſſes reach'd his native ſhore.
A double ſtrength of bars ſecur'd the gates:
Faſt by the door the wiſe Euryclea waits;
Euryclea, who, great Ops! thy lineage ſhar'd,
And watch'd all night, all day; a faithful guard.

To whom the prince. O thou, whoſe guardian care
Nurs'd the moſt wretched king that breathes the air!
Untouch'd and ſacred may theſe veſſels ſtand,
Till great Ulyſſes views his native land.
But by thy care twelve urns of wine be fill'd,
Next theſe in worth, and firm thoſe urns be ſeal'd;
And twice ten meaſures of the choiceſt flour
Prepar'd, ere yet deſcends the evening hour.
For when the fav'ring ſhades of night ariſe,
And peaceful ſlumbers cloſe my mother's eyes,

℣. 394. —*Oh thou, whoſe guardian care*
Nurs'd the moſt wretched king.]
Euryclea was not properly the nurſe of Telemachus, but of Ulyſſes; ſo that ſhe is called ſo not in a ſtrict ſenſe, but as one concerned in his education from his infancy, and as a general appellation of honour. Telemachus here reſerves the beſt wines for Ulyſſes; a leſſon, obſerves Euſtathius, that even in the ſmalleſt matters we ought to pay a deference to our parents. Theſe occaſional and ſeemingly-trivial circumſtances are not without their uſe, if not as poetical ornaments, yet as moral inſtructions.

Me from our coaſt ſhall ſpreading ſails convey,
To ſeek Ulyſſes through the wat'ry way.

While yet he ſpoke, ſhe fill'd the walls with cries,
And tears ran trickling from her aged eyes.
Oh whither, whither flies my ſon? ſhe cry'd,
To realms, that rocks and roaring ſeas divide?
In foreign lands thy father's days decay'd,
And foreign lands contain the mighty dead.
The wat'ry way ill-fated if thou try,
All, all muſt periſh, and by fraud you die!
Then ſtay, my child! ſtorms beat, and rolls the main;
Oh beat thoſe ſtorms, and roll the ſeas in vain!

Far hence, reply'd the prince, thy fears be driv'n:
Heav'n calls me forth; theſe counſels are of heav'n.
But by the powers that hate the perjur'd, ſwear,
To keep my voyage from the royal ear,
Nor uncompell'd the dang'rous truth betray,
Till twice ſix times deſcends the lamp of day:

ỳ. 421. *Till twice ſix times deſcends the lamp of day.*] It may be demanded how it was probable, if poſſible, that the departure of Telemachus could be concealed twelve days from the knowlege of ſo fond a mother as Penelope? It muſt be allowed, that this would not be poſſible except in a time of ſuch great diſorder as the ſuitors created: Penelope confined herſelf almoſt continually within her own apartment, and very ſeldom appeared publicly; ſo that there is no improbability in this relation. Dacier.

Euſtathius make a criticiſm upon the words ἀπομνύναι and ἐπομνύναι, the former is uſed negatively, the latter affirmatively; namely, the former in ſwearing *not to perform* a thing, the latter *to perform it.*

Leſt the ſad tale a mother's life impair,
And grief deſtroy what time a while would ſpare.
Thus he. The matron with uplifted eyes
Atteſts th' all-ſeeing ſovereign of the ſkies.
Then ſtudious ſhe prepares the choiceſt flour,
The ſtrength of wheat, and wines an ample ſtore.
While to the rival train the prince returns,
The martial goddeſs with impatience burns;
Like thee, Telemachus, in voice and ſize,
With ſpeed divine from ſtreet to ſtreet ſhe flies,
She bids the mariners prepar'd to ſtand,
When night deſcends, embodied on the ſtrand.
Then to Noemon ſwift ſhe runs, ſhe flies,
And aſks a bark: the chief a bark ſupplies.

ỳ. 432. *She bids the mariners*, etc.] It is probable that this paſſage of Minerva preparing the mariners, etc. is thus to be underſtood: the men of Ithaca, retaining in memory the ſpeech of Telemachus, and believing that what he then ſaid, and now requeſts, was agreeable to juſtice; and having as it were his image graven upon their hearts; voluntarily reſolve to lend him aſſiſtance: ſo that Minerva is to be taken allegorically, to imply that it was every perſon's own reaſon that induced him to aſſiſt Telemachus. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 435. *Noemon —— the bark ſupplies.*] It may be aſked why this particularity is neceſſary, and may it not be thought that ſuch a little circumſtance is inſignificant? The anſwer is, that a great deal depends upon this particularity; no leſs than the diſcovery of the voyage of Telemachus to the ſuitors; and conſequently, whatever the ſuitors act in order to intercept him takes its riſe from this little incident; the fountain is indeed ſmall, but a large ſtream of poetry flows from it.

And now, declining with his ſloping wheels,
Down ſunk the ſun behind the weſtern hills.
The goddeſs ſhov'd the veſſel from ſhores,
And ſtow'd within its womb the naval ſtores,
Full in the openings of the ſpacious main
It rides; and now deſcends the ſailor train.

Next, to the court, impatient of delay
With rapid ſtep the goddeſs urg'd her way:
There ev'ry eye with ſlumbrous chains ſhe bound,
And daſh'd the flowing goblet to the ground.
Drowzy they roſe, with heavy fumes oppreſt,
Reel'd from the palace, and retir'd to reſt.

Then thus, in Mentor's rev'rend form array'd,
Spoke to Telemachus the martial maid.

ỳ. 444. *There every eye with ſlumbrous chains ſhe bound.*] The words in the original are εὕδειν and ὕπνος, which are not to be taken for being *aſleep*, but *drowzy*; this is evident from the uſage of καθεύδειν, in the concluſion of the firſt book of the Iliad, where the ſignification has been miſtaken by moſt tranſlators: they make Jupiter there to be aſleep; though two lines afterwards, in the ſecond book, Homer expreſly ſays,

Th' immortals ſlumber'd on their thrones above:
All but the ever-waking eyes of Jove.

It may be aſked how Minerva can be ſaid to occaſion this drowzineſs in the ſuitors, and make them retire ſooner than uſual? Euſtathius replies, that the perſon who furniſhed the wine ſupplied it in greater quantities than ordinary, through which wine they contracted a drowzineſs: in this ſenſe Minerva, or wiſdom, may be ſaid to aſſiſt the deſigns of Telemachus.

Lo! on the ſeas prepar'd the veſſel ſtands;
Th' impatient mariner thy ſpeed demands.
Swift as ſhe ſpoke, with rapid pace ſhe leads,
The footſteps of the deity he treads.
Swift to the ſhore they move: along the ſtrand
The ready veſſel rides, the ſailors ready ſtand
He bids them bring their ſtores; th' attending train
Load the tall bark, and launch into the main.
The prince and goddeſs to the ſtern aſcend;
To the ſtrong ſtroke at once the rowers bend.
Full from the weſt ſhe bids freſh breezes blow;
The ſable billows foam and roar below.
The chief his orders gives: th' obedient band
With due obſervance wait the chief's command;
With ſpeed the maſt they rear, with ſpeed unbind
The ſpacious ſheet, and ſtretch it to the wind.

℣. 460. *She bids freſh breezes blow.*] This alſo is an allegory, and implies that the ſailors had the experience and art to guide the ſhip before the winds; but poetry that delights to raiſe every circumſtance, exalts it into the marvellous, and aſcribes it to the goddeſs of wiſdom. Euſtathius.

℣. 464. *With ſpeed the maſt they rear*, etc.] It is obſervable, that Homer never paſſes by an opportunity of deſcribing the ſea, or a ſhip under ſail; (and in many other places, as well as in this, he dwells largely upon it:) I take the reaſon to be, not only becauſe it furniſhed him with variety of poetical images, but becauſe he himſelf having made frequent voyages, had a full idea of it, and conſequently was delighted with it: this is evident from his conduct in the Iliad, where variety of alluſions and ſimilitudes are drawn from the ſea, and are not the ſmalleſt ornaments of his poetry.

High o'er the roaring waves the ſpreading ſails
Bow the tall maſt, and ſwell before the gales;
The crooked keel the parting ſurge divides,
And to the ſtern retreating roll the tides,
And now they ſhip their oars, and crown with wine
The holy goblet to the pow'rs divine:

ỷ. 470. ——— *And crown with wine*
The holy goblet to the pow'rs divine.]
The cuſtom of libations was frequent upon all ſolemn occaſions, before meat, before ſleep, voyages, journeys; and in all religious rites, ſacrifices, etc. They were always made with wine, pure and unmixed, whence ἄκρατον is a word frequent in antient authors. Sometimes they uſed mixed wine in ſacrifices; but Euſtathius ſays, that this mixture was of wine with wine, and not of wine with water; hence came the diſtinction of ἔνσπονδον and ἄσπονδον, the unlawful and lawful libation; wine unmixed was lawful, the mixed unlawful. Homer in this place uſes ἐπιστεφέας κρητῆρας, or, *goblets crowned with wine*; that is, filled till the wine ſtood above the brime of the goblet; they eſteemed it an irreverence to the gods not to fill the cups full, for then only they eſteemed the libation *whole* and *perfect*, ὅλον καὶ τέλειον.

This book takes up the ſpace of one day and one night: it opens with the morning; the ſpeeches in the council, with the preparations for the voyage of Telemachus, are the ſubject of the day; and the voyage is finiſhed by the next morning. By this laſt circumſtance we may learn, that Ithaca was diſtant from Pylos but one night's voyage, nay, ſomething leſs, there being ſome time ſpent after the ſetting of the ſun, in carrying the proviſions from the palace to the veſſel.

The book conſiſts chiefly in the ſpeeches of Telemachus and his friends, againſt thoſe of the ſuitors. It ſhews the great judgment of the poet in chuſing this

Imploring all the gods that reign above,
But chief the blue-ey'd progeny of Jove.
Thus all the night they ſtem the liquid way,
And end their voyage with the morning ray.

method: hence we ſee the cauſes preceeding the effects; and know from what ſpring every action flowed: we are never at a loſs for a reaſon for every incident; the ſpeeches are, as it were, the ground-work upon which he builds all that relates to the adventures of Telemachus.

In the Iliad, after the diſſolution of the council in the firſt book, and the diſſention between Agamemnon and Achilles, we immediately ſee upon what hinge the fable turns. So in the Odyſſey, after the poet has laid before us the warm debates between the ſuitors and Telemachus, we immediately expect them to act as enemies: the war is declared, and we become judges as well as ſpectators of the ſcenes of action. Thus Homer adds the perſpicuity of hiſtory to the ornaments of poetry.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

The interview of Telemachus and Neſtor.

Telemachus, guided by Pallas in the ſhape of Mentor, arrives in the morning at Pylos; where Neſtor and his ſons are ſacrificing on the ſea-ſhore to Nepture. Telemachus declares the occaſion of his coming, and Neſtor relates what paſt in their return from Troy, how their fleets were ſeparated, and he never ſince heard of Ulyſſes. They diſcourſe concerning the death of Agamemnon, the revenge of Oreſtes, and the injuries of the ſuitors. Neſtor adviſes him to go to Sparta and enquire further of Menelaus. The ſacrifice ending with the night, Minerva vaniſhes from them in the form of an eagle: Telemachus is lodged in the palace. The next morning they ſacrifice a bullock to Minerva, and Telemachus proceeds on his journey to Sparta, attended by Piſiſtratus.

The SCENE lies on the ſea-ſhore of Pylos.

THE ſacred ſun, above the waters rais'd,
Through heav'n's eternal, brazen portals blaz'd;
And wide o'er earth diffus'd his chearing ray,
To gods and men to give the golden day.

The ſcene is now removed from Ithaca to Pylos, and with it a new vein of poetry is opened: inſtead of the

Now on the coaſt of Pyle the veſſel falls,
Before old Neleus' venerable walls.

riots of the ſuitors, we are entertained with the wiſdom and piety of Neſtor. This and the following book are a kind of ſupplement to the Iliad; the nature of epic poetry requires that ſomething ſhould be left to the imagination of the reader, nor is the picture to be intirely drawn at full length. Homer therefore, to ſatisfy our curioſity, gives an account of the fortunes of thoſe great men, who made ſo noble a figure at the ſiege of Troy. This conduct alſo ſhews his art: variety gives life and delight; and it is much more neceſſary in epic than in comic or tragic poetry ſometimes to ſhift the ſcenes, to diverſify and embelliſh the ſtory. But as on the ſtage the poet ought not to ſtep at once from one part of the world to a too remote country, (for this deſtroys credibility, and the auditor cannot fancy himſelf this minute here, and the next a thouſand miles diſtant) ſo in epic poetry, every removal muſt be within the degrees of probability. We have here a very eaſy tranſition; the poet carries his hero no farther than he really might ſail in the compaſs of time he allots for his voyage. If he had ſtill dwelt upon the diſorders of the ſuitors without interruption, he muſt grow tireſome; but he artfully breaks the thread of their ſtory with beautiful incidents and epiſodes, and reſerves the further recital of their diſorders for the end of his poem: by this method we ſit down with freſh appetite to the entertainment, and riſe at laſt not cloyed, but ſatisfied.

℣. 2. *Through heav'n's eternal, brazen portals*——] The original calls heaven πολύχαλκον, or *brazen;* the reaſon of it ariſes either from the palaces of the gods being built of braſs by Vulcan; or rather the word implies no more than the ſtability of heaven, which for the ſame reaſon is in other places called σιδήρειον, or *framed of iron.* Euſtathius.

There, ſuppliant to the monarch of the flood,
At nine green theatres the Pylians ſtood,
Each held five hundred, (a deputed train)
At each, nine oxen on the ſand lay ſlain.
They taſte the entrails, and the altars load
With ſmoking thighs, an offering to the god.

℣. 8. *At nine green theatres.*] It may be aſked why the poet is ſo very particular as to mention that the Pylians were divided into nine aſſemblies; and may it not ſeem a circumſtance of no importance? Euſtathius anſwers from the antients, that there were nine cities ſubject to the power of Neſtor: five in Pylos, the reſt in Boeotia; the poet therefore allots one bank or theatre to every city, which conſiſted of 500 men, the whole number amounting to 4500: theſe cities furniſhed the like complement of men to Neſtor for the war at Troy: he ſailed in ninety veſſels, and allowing fifty men to each veſſel, they amount to that number. Hence it appears, that this was a national ſacrifice, every city furniſhed nine bulls, and by conſequence the whole nation were partakers of it.

℣. Ibid. *The ſacrifice of the Pylians.*] This was a very ſolemn ſacrifice of the Pylians; how comes it then to paſs, that Homer paſſes it over in one line? Euſtathius anſwers, that the occaſion diſallows a longer deſcription, and Homer knows when to ſpeak, and when to be ſilent. He chuſes to carry on the adventures of Telemachus, rather than amuſe himſelf in deſcriptions that contribute nothing to the ſtory; he finds a time of more leiſure in the latter part of this book, and there he deſcribes it at length.

℣. 11. *They taſte the entrails.*] That is, every perſon eat a ſmall portion of the ſacrifice, and by this method every perſon became partaker of it.

There is nothing in Homer that ſhews where this ſa-

Full for the port the Ithacenſians ſtand,
And furl their ſails, and iſſue on the land.
Telemachus already preſt the ſhore;
Not firſt, the Pow'r of wiſdom march'd before,
And ere the ſacrificing throng he join'd,
Admoniſh'd thus his well-attending mind.

Proceed, my ſon! this youthful ſhame expel;
An honeſt buſineſs ne'er bluſh to tell.
To learn what fates thy wretched ſire detain,
We paſt the wide, immeaſurable main.
Meet then the ſenior far renown'd for ſenſe,
With rev'rent awe, but decent confidence:
Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies;
And ſure he will: for wiſdom never lies.

O tell me, Mentor! tell me, faithful guide,
(The youth with prudent modeſty reply'd)

crifice was offered, whether in a temple, on in the open air. But Euſtathius tells us from Strabo, that it was in the temple of Samian Neptune, ἐν ἱερῷ Σαμίου ποσειδῶνος.

ỳ. 25. *Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies;*
And ſure he will: for wiſdom never lies.]
This ſentiment is truly noble, and as nobly expreſſed: the ſimplicity of the diction correſponds with that of the thought. Homer, in many places, teſtifies the utmoſt abhorrence of a lye. This verſe is twice repeated in the preſent book, as well as in ſome others; and nothing can be ſtronger in the ſame view than that of Achilles in the 9th Iliad:

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart deteſts him as the gates of hell.

How ſhall I meet, or how accoſt the ſage,
Unſkill'd in ſpeech, nor yet mature of age?
Awful th' approach, and hard the taſk appears,
To queſtion wiſely men of riper years.
  To whom the martial goddeſs thus rejoin'd.
Search, for ſome thoughts, thy own ſuggeſting mind;
And others, dictated by heav'nly pow'r,
Shall riſe ſpontaneous in the needful hour.
For nought unproſp'rous ſhall thy ways attend,
Born with good omens, and with heav'n thy friend.
  She ſpoke, and led the way with ſwifteſt ſpeed:
As ſwift, the youth purſu'd the way ſhe led;

ꝟ. 38. *Born with good omens, and with heav'n thy friend.*] There is ſome obſcurity in the Greek expreſſion, and the antient critics have made it more obſcure by their falſe interpretations; they imagine that the poet only meant to ſay, that Telemachus was the legitimate ſon of Penelope and Ulyſſes. Euſtathius.

Dacier very juſtly condemns this explication, as unworthy of Homer; and gives us a more plain and natural interpretation; viz. 'You were not born in deſpite 'of the gods, that is, you are well made, and of a good 'preſence, you have good inclinations, and, in a word, 'your birth is happy.' She explains τραφέμεν after the ſame manner: 'You were not educated in deſpite of 'the gods;' that is, 'the gods have bleſſed your edu'cation:' this explication ſeems to be juſt, and anſwers perfectly the deſign of Minerva; which was to give a decent aſſurance to Telemachus. You are a perſon, ſays the goddeſs, of a good preſence, and happy education, why then ſhould you be aſhamed to appear before Neſtor?

And join'd the band before the ſacred fire,
Where ſat, encompaſt with his ſons, the ſire.
The youth of Pylos, ſome on pointed wood
Transfix'd the fragments, ſome prepar'd the food.
In friendly throngs they gather to embrace
Their unknown gueſts, and at the banquet place.
Piſiſtratus was firſt, to graſp their hands,
And ſpread ſoft hides upon the yellow ſands;
Along the ſhore th' illuſtrious pair he led,
Where Neſtor ſat with youthful Thraſymed.

ỳ. 48. *And ſpread ſoft hides upon the yellow ſands.*] It is with great pleaſure that I read ſuch paſſages in an author of ſo great antiquity, as are pictures of the ſimplicity of thoſe heroic ages: it is the remark of Euſtathius, that Piſiſtratus the ſon of a king does not ſeat theſe ſtrangers upon purple tapeſtry, or any other coſtly furniture, but upon the ſkins of beaſts, that had nothing to recommend them but their ſoftneſs; being ſpread upon the ſand of the ſea-ſhores.

This whole paſſage pleaſes me extremely; there is a ſpirit of true devotion, morality, and good ſenſe in it; and the decency of behaviour between Neſtor and Telemachus is deſcribed very happily: Neſtor ſhews great benevolence to Telemachus; Telemachus great reverence to Neſtor: the modeſty of the one, and the humanity of the other, are worthy of our obſervation. We ſee the ſame picture of Neſtor in the Odyſſey that was drawn of him in the Iliads, with this only difference, that there he was a counſellor of war, here he is painted in ſofter colours, ruling his people in peace, and diffuſing a ſpirit of piety through his whole territories. He had now ſurvived the war of Troy almoſt ten years; and the gods reward the old age of this wiſe and religious prince with peace and happineſs.

To each a portion of the feaſt he bore,
And held the golden goblet foaming o'er;
Then firſt approaching to the elder gueſt,
The latent goddeſs in theſe words addreſt.
Whoe'er thou art, whom fortune brings to keep
Theſe rites of Neptune, monarch of the deep,
Thee firſt it fits, oh ſtranger! to prepare
The due libation and the ſolemn pray'r:
Then give thy friend to ſhed the ſacred wine;
Though much thy younger, and his years like mine,
He too, I deem, implores the pow'rs divine:
For all mankind alike require their grace,
All born to want; a miſerable race!
He ſpake, and to her hand preferr'd the bowl:
A ſecret pleaſure touch'd Athena's ſoul,
To ſee the pref'rence due to ſacred age
Regarded ever by the juſt and ſage.
Of ocean's king ſhe then implores the grace.
Oh thou! whoſe arms this ample globe embrace,
Fulfil our wiſh, and let thy glory ſhine
On Neſtor firſt, and Neſtor's royal line;
Next grant the Pylian ſtates their juſt deſires,
Pleas'd with their hecatomb's aſcending fires;
Laſt deign Telemachus and me to bleſs,
And crown our voyage with deſir'd ſucceſs.

Ver. 74. *Laſt deign Telemachus and me to bleſs*——] Since Minerva here mentions the name of Telemachus in her prayer; how comes it to paſs, that Neſtor is at a loſs to know Telemachus? Minerva ſat cloſe by

Thus ſhe; and having paid the rite divine,
Gave to Ulyſſes' ſon the roſy wine.
Suppliant he pray'd. And now the victims dreſt
They draw, divide, and celebrate the feaſt.
The banquet done, the narrative old man
Thus mild the pleaſing conference began.

Now, gentle gueſts! the genial banquet o'er,
It fits to aſk ye, what your native ſhore,
And whence your race? on what adventure, ſay,
Thus far ye wander through the wat'ry way?
Relate, if buſineſs, or the thirſt of gain
Engage your journey o'er the pathleſs main?

Neſtor; he muſt therefore be ſuppoſed to hear the prayer; and yet in the following lines he inquires who theſe ſtrangers are? We can ſcarce imagine Neſtor ignorant that the ſon of Ulyſſes was named Telemachus, there being ſo ſtrict a friendſhip between Neſtor and Ulyſſes. Perhaps therefore Minerva prayed in ſecret mentally: or perhaps Neſtor might not take notice of what was not addreſt immediately to him, and conſequently make inquiry about it for the greater certainty.

℣. 86. *Relate, if buſineſs, or the thirſt of gain,* etc.] If we form our images of perſons and actions in antient times, from the images of perſons and actions in modern ages, we ſhall fall into great miſtakes: thus in the preſent paſſage, if we annex the ſame idea of pyracy, as it was practiſed three thouſand years paſt, to pyracy as it is practiſed in our ages; what can be a greater affront than this inquiry of Neſtor? But, ſays Euſtathius, pyracy was formerly not only accounted lawful, but honourable. I doubt not but Thucydides had this paſſage in view, when he ſays, that the antient poets introduce men inquiring of thoſe who frequent the ſea, if they be pyrates, as a thing no way ignominious. Thucydides

Where savage pyrates seek through seas unknown
The lives of others, vent'rous of their own.
  Urg'd by the precepts by the goddess giv'n,
And fill'd with confidence infus'd from heav'n,
The youth whom Pallas destin'd to be wise
And fam'd among the sons of men, replies.
Enquir'st thou, father! from what coast we came?
(Oh grace and glory of the Grecian name!)
From where high Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Brown with o'er-arching shades and pendent woods.
Us to these shores our filial duty draws,
A private sorrow, not a public cause.
My sire I seek, where-e'er the voice of fame
Has told the glories of his noble name,
The great Ulysses; fam'd from shore to shore
For valour much, for hardy suff'ring more.
Long time with thee before proud Ilion's wall
In arms he fought; with thee beheld her fall.
Of all the chiefs, this hero's fate alone
Has Jove reserv'd, unheard of, and unknown;
Whether in fields by hostile fury slain,
Or sunk by tempests in the gulphy main?

tells us in the same place, that all those who lived on the sea-coast, or in the islands, maintained themselves by frequent inroads upon unfortified towns, and if such pyracies were nobly performed, they were accounted glorious. Herodotus also writes, that many of the antients, especially about Thrace, thought it ignominious to live by labouring the ground, but to live by pyracy and plunder was esteemed a life of honour. Eustathius.

Of this to learn, oppreſt with tender fears
Lo at thy knee his ſuppliant ſon appears.
If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,
Have learn'd his fate, the whole dark ſtory clear:
And oh! whate'er heav'n deſtin'd to betide
Let neither flatt'ry ſmooth, nor pity hide.
Prepar'd I ſtand: he was but born to try
The lot of man; to ſuffer, and to die.
Oh then, if ever through the ten years war
The wiſe, the good Ulyſſes claim'd thy care;
If e'er he join'd thy council, or thy ſword,
True in his deed, and conſtant to his word;
Far as thy mind through backward time can ſee,
Search all thy ſtores of faithful memory:
'Tis ſacred truth I aſk, and aſk of thee.
  To him experienc'd Neſtor thus rejoin'd.
O friend! what ſorrows doſt thou bring to mind?

℣. 125. *The ſpeech of Neſtor.*] Euſtathius obſerves the modeſty of Neſtor: Telemachus had aſcribed the fall of Troy in a great meaſure to Neſtor; but Neſtor ſpeaks not in particular of himſelf, but is content with his ſhare of glory in common with other warriors: he ſpeaks in the plural number, and joins all the Greeks as in the war, ſo in the glory of it. Neſtor mentions the ſufferings of the Greeks by ſea, as well as by land, during the ſiege of Troy: to underſtand this, it is neceſſary to remember, that the Greeks made many expeditions againſt other places during the war, both by ſea and land, as appears, from many paſſages in the Iliads, particularly from what Achilles ſays in the ninth book.

Shall I the long, laborious ſcene review?
And open all the wounds of Greece anew?
What toils by ſea! where dark in queſt of prey
Dauntleſs we rov'd; Achilles led the way:
What toils by land! where mixt in fatal fight
Such numbers fell, ſuch heroes ſunk to night:
There Ajax great, Achilles there the brave,
There wiſe Patroclus, fill an early grave:
There too my ſon—ah once my beſt delight,
Once ſwift of foot, and terrible in fight,
In whom ſtern courage with ſoft virtue join'd,
A faultleſs body, and a blameleſs mind:

℣. 133. *There Ajax great, Achilles there the brave.*] I have obſerved, that the poet inſerts into the Odyſſey ſeveral incidents that happened after the fall of Troy, and by that method agreeably diverſifies his poetry, and ſatisfies the curioſity of the reader. Euſtathius remarks here, that he gives a title of honour to all the heroes he mentions, except only to Achilles. Achilles had been the occaſion of the ſufferings and death of many of the Greeks by his anger, and obſtinacy in refuſing to obey Agamemnon; therefore while Neſtor is lamenting the calamities of the Greeks, he paſſes over Achilles without any honourable mention, who had ſo greatly added to their ſufferings. But I think this remark chimerical: one may as well ſay Achilles needed no epithet to diſtinguiſh him.

It is with pleaſure I ſee the old man dwell upon the praiſe of Antilochus: the father enlarges upon the fame of the ſon; he gives him four epithets of glory; and while Ajax is only praiſed as a warrior, Antilochus is great and good, excellent in the ſtanding fight, or ſwift to purſue an enemy. Longinus has obſerved upon the beauty of this paſſage.

Antilochus —— what more can I relate?
How trace the tedious ſeries of our fate?
Not added years on years my taſk could cloſe,
The long hiſtorian of my country's woes:
Back to thy native iſlands might'ſt thou ſail,
And leave half-heard the melancholy tale.
Nine painful years, on that deteſted ſhore
What ſtratagems we form'd, what toils we bore?
Still lab'ring on, till ſcarce at laſt we found
Great Jove propitious, and our conqueſt crown'd.
Far o'er the reſt thy mighty father ſhin'd,
In wit, in prudence, and in force of mind.
Art thou the ſon of that illuſtrious ſire?
With joy I graſp thee, and with love admire.
So like your voices, and your words ſo wiſe,
Who finds thee younger muſt conſult his eyes.
Thy ſire and I were one; nor vary'd ought
In public ſentence, or in private thought;

℣. 149. *Far o'er the reſt thy mighty father ſhin'd.*] Neſtor ſpeaks of Ulyſſes as an inſeparable friend; and it ſhews an excellent diſpoſition in them both, to be rivals, and yet without envy. But the art of Neſtor is remarkable, he firſt gives the character to Ulyſſes of being ſuperior in wiſdom to all the Greeks; and yet at laſt he finds a way ſecretly to ſet himſelf on a level with him, if not above him: we ever, ſays he, thought the ſame thoughts, and were ever of the ſame ſentiments: which, though it may imply that they were of equal wiſdom; yet there is room left for it to ſignify, that Ulyſſes always aſſented to the wiſdom of Neſtor. Euſtathius.

Alike to council or th' aſſembly came,
With equal ſouls, and ſentiments the ſame.
But when, by wiſdom won, proud Ilion burn'd,
And in their ſhips the conqu'ring Greeks return'd ;
'Twas God's high will the victors to divide,
And turn th' event, confounding human pride :
Some he deſtroy'd, ſome ſcatter'd as the duſt,
(Not all were prudent, and not all were juſt)
Then Diſcord, ſent by Pallas from above,
Stern daughter of the great avenger Jove,

ỳ. 157. *The council or the aſſembly.*] There is a remarkable difference between βυλὴ and ἀγορὰ. The former denotes a ſelect number of men aſſembled in council, the latter a public aſſembly where all the people were preſent. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 165. *Sent by Pallas*—] Neſtor in modeſty conceals the reaſon of the anger of the goddeſs ; out of reſpect to Ajax the Locrean who was then dead : the crime of Ajax was the violation of Caſſandra even in the temple of Minerva before her image. But why ſhould the goddeſs be angry at others for the crime of Ajax ? This is becauſe they omitted to puniſh the offender. If Ajax was criminal in offending, others are criminal for not puniſhing the offence. Euſtathius.

The crime of Ajax is mentioned in Virgil. Æn. 1.

——————— *Pallaſne exurere claſſem*
Argivum, atque ipſos potuit ſubmergere ponto,
Unius ob noxam, et furias Ajacis Oilei ? etc.

Could angry Pallas with revengeful ſpleen
The Grecian navy burn, and drown the men ?
She for the fault of one offending foe,
The bolts of Jove himſelf preſum'd to throw. *Dryd.*

The brother-kings inſpir'd with fell debate;
Who call'd to council all th' Achaian ſtate,
But call'd untimely (not the ſacred rite
Obſerv'd, nor heedful of the ſetting light,
Nor herald ſworn, the ſeſſion to proclaim)
Sour with debauch, a reeling tribe they came.
To theſe the cauſe of meeting they explain,
And Menelaus moves to croſs the main;
Not ſo the king of men: he will'd to ſtay;
The ſacred rites and hecatombs to pay,
And calm Minerva's wrath. Oh blind to fate!
The gods not lightly change their love, or hate.

Virgil borrowed the deſcription of the puniſhment of Ajax from the fourth of the Odyſſey.

℣. 168, etc. *Who call'd to council*——
But call'd untimely, etc.

It may ſeem at firſt view, that the poet affirms the night to be an improper ſeaſon to convene a council. This is not his meaning: in the Iliad, there are ſeveral councils by night; nay, ἐν νυκτὶ βουλὴ is uſed proverbially to expreſs the beſt concerted councils. What therefore Neſtor here condemns is the calling not a ſelect, but public aſſembly of the ſoldiers in the night, when they are not in danger of the enemy, and when they are apt to fly into inſolence through wine, and the joy of victory. The night is then undoubtedy an ill choſen ſeaſon: becauſe the licenſe of the ſoldier cannot be ſo well reſtrained by night as by day. Euſtathius.

℣. 177. *Oh blind to fate!*] It may be aſked why Neſtor condems ſo ſolemnly this hero, calling him Νήπιος, when he deſcribes him in ſo pious an action? this is not becauſe the gods are implacable, for as Ho-

With ire-ful taunts each other they oppoſe,
Till in loud tumult all the Greeks aroſe.
Now diff'rent counſels ev'ry breaſt divide,
Each burns with rancour to the adverſe ſide;
Th' unquiet night ſtrange projects entertain'd;
(So Jove, that urg'd us to our fate, ordain'd.)
We, with the riſing morn our ſhips unmoor'd,
And brought our captives and our ſtores aboard;
But half the people with reſpect obey'd
The king of men, and at his bidding ſtay'd.
Now on the wings of winds our courſe we keep,
(For God had ſmooth'd the waters of the deep)
For Tenedos we ſpread our eager oars,
There land and pay due victims to the Pow'rs:
To bleſs our ſafe return we join in pray'r,
But angry Jove diſpers'd our vows in air,
And rais'd new diſcord. Then (ſo heav'n decreed)
Ulyſſes firſt and Neſtor diſagreed:
Wiſe as he was, by various counſels ſway'd,
He there, though late, to pleaſe the monarch, ſtay'd.

mer himſelf writes, Στρεπτοὶ δὲ καὶ θεοὶ αὐτοὶ; but becauſe he vainly imagined that they would ſo ſoon be appeaſed, without any juſtice done upon the offender: Θεὸν ῥᾳδιως παλίντροπον are the words of Euſtathius.

℣. 197. *Wiſe as he was, by various counſels ſway'd,*
He there, tho' late, to pleaſe the monarch, ſtay'd.] It is with great addreſs that Neſtor ralates the return of Ulyſſes to Agamemnon; he aſcribes it not directly to Ulyſſes, but to his aſſociates in the voyage; he mollifies it, in complaiſance to Telemachus. But Neſtor, accord-

But I, determin'd, ſtem the foamy floods,
Warn'd of the coming fury of the gods.
With us Tydides fear'd, and urg'd his haſte:
And Menelaus came, but came the laſt.
He join'd our veſſels in the Leſbian bay,
While yet we doubted of our wat'ry way;
If to the right to urge the pilot's toil,
(The ſafer road) beſide the Pſyrian iſle:
Or the ſtrait courſe to rocky Chios plow,
And anchor under Mimas' ſhaggy brow?
We ſought direction of the pow'r divine:
The God propitious gave the guiding ſign;
Through the mid ſeas he bids our navy ſteer,
And in Eubea ſhun the woes we fear.
The whiſtling winds already wak'd the ſky;
Before the whiſtling winds the veſſels fly,
With rapid ſwiftneſs cut the liquid way,
And reach Gereſtus at the point of day.

ing to Dacier, conceals the true reaſon of his return; it was not to pleaſe Agamemnon, but out of fear of the goddeſs Minerva, whoſe ſtatue he had taken by force from Troy: to appeaſe that goddeſs he returns to join in ſacrifice with Agamemnon. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 200. *Warn'd of the coming fury of the gods.*] It may be aſked how Neſtor attained this knowlege of the evils which the gods were preparing? Euſtathius aſcribes it to his great wiſdom, which gave him an inſight into futurity. Dacier, with more reaſon, tell us, that Neſtor knew that Minerva had been offended, and might conſequently apprehend a puniſhment was to be inflicted for the offence.

There hecatombs of bulls to Neptune ſlain
High-flaming pleaſe the monarch of the main.
The fourth day ſhone, when all their labours o'er
Tydides' veſſels touch'd the wiſh'd-for ſhore:
But I to Pylos ſcud before the gales,
The god ſtill breathing on my ſwelling ſails;
Sep'rate from all, I ſafely landed here;
Their fates or fortunes never reach'd my ear.
Yet what I learn'd, attend; as here I ſat,
And aſk each voyager each hero's fate;
Curious to know, and willing to relate.
Safe reach'd the Myrmidons their native land,
Beneath Achilles' warlike ſon's command.

ỳ. 221. *But I to Pylos*, etc.] Euſtathius obſerves from the ancients, that the poet, with great judgment, ſuſpends, and breaks off this relation of Neſtor; by this method he has an opportunity to carry Telemachus to other countries, and inſert into his poem the ſtory of Menelaus and Helen: this method likewiſe gives an air of probability to what he writes; the poet ſeems afraid to deceive, and when he ſends Telemachus to other parts for better intelligence, he ſeems to conſult truth and exactneſs.

ỳ. 229. *Achilles' warlike ſon.*] The ſon of Achilles was named Neoptolemus, by others Pyrrhus; his ſtory is this: when he had reached Theſſaly with the Myrmidons of Achilles, by the advice of Thetis he ſet fire to his veſſels: and being warned by Helenus, from the oracles, to fix his habitation where he found a houſe whoſe foundations were iron, whoſe walls were wood, and whoſe roof was wool; he took his journey on foot, and coming to a certain lake of Epirus, he found ſome perſons fixing their ſpears with the point downwards

Thofe, whom the heir of great Apollo's art,
Brave Philoctetes, taught to wing the dart;
And thofe whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
Had led, fecurely croft the dreadful main.
How Agamemnon touch'd his Argive coaft,
And how his life by fraud and force he loft,
And how the murd'rer pay'd his forfeit breath;
What land fo diftant from that fcene of death
But trembling heard the fame? and heard, admire
How well the fon appeas'd his flaughter'd fire!
Ev'n to th' unhappy, that unjuftly bleed,
Heav'n gives pofterity t' avenge the deed.
So fell Ægyftus; and may'ft thou my friend,
(On whom the virtues of thy fire defcend)
Make future times thy equal act adore,
And be what brave Oreftes was before!

into the earth, and covering the tops of them with their cloaks, and after this manner making their tents: he looked upon the oracle as fulfilled, and dwelt there. Afterwards having a fon by Andromache the wife of Hector, he named him Moloffus, from whom the region took the name of Moloffia. From this country are *Moloffi canes*, mentioned by Virgil. Euftathius.

ỳ. 242. *So fell Ægyfthus; and may'ft thou, my friend,* etc.] Neftor introduces the mention of Ægyfthus very artfully; it is to raife an emulation in Telemachus to revenge Ulyffes, as Oreftes had Agamemnon; it has the intended effect, and we find that Telemachus dwells upon his ftory with a virtuous envy; yet at the fame time with great modefty; Euftathius gives a different reading in

------ ἐσσομένοισι πύθεσθαι, or,
------ ἐσσομένοισιν ἀοιδήν.

The prudent youth reply'd. Oh thou the grace
And laſting glory of the Grecian race!
Juſt was the vengeance, and to lateſt days
Shall long poſterity reſound the praiſe.
Some god this arm with equal prowefs bleſs!
And the proud ſuitors ſhall its force confeſs:
Injurious men! who while my ſoul is ſore
Of freſh affronts, are meditating more.
But heav'n denies this honour to my hand,
Nor ſhall my father repoſſeſs the land:
The father's fortune never to return,
And the ſad ſon's to ſuffer and to mourn!

Thus he, and Neſtor took the word: my ſon,
Is it then true, as diſtant rumours run,
That crouds of rivals for thy mother's charms
Thy palace fill with inſults and alarms?
Say, is the fault, through tame ſubmiſſion thine?
Or leagu'd againſt thee, do thy people join,
Mov'd by ſome oracle, or voice divine?

both the expreſſions are uſed in Homer, the preference is therefore ſubmitted to the reader.

ỿ. 264. *Mov'd by ſome oracle, or voice divine.*] The words in the original are, *follow the voice of ſome god,* that is, ſome oracle: Homer does not confine the expreſſion either to a good or bad ſenſe; but the context plainly ſhews, that they muſt be underſtood in a bad ſenſe; namely, to imply, that the people had recourſe to pretended oracles to juſtify their rebellion. This is evident from what follows, where Neſtor encourages Telemachus to expect that Ulyſſes may puniſh them for

And yet who knows, but ripening lies in fate
An hour of vengeance for the afflicted ſtate;
When great Ulyſſes ſhall ſuppreſs theſe harms,
Ulyſſes ſingly, or all Greece in arms.

their crimes, ἀποτίσεται ἐλθὼν---- if there had been no crime, there ought to be no puniſhment.

℣. 268. *Ulyſſes ſingly, or all Greece in arms.*] The poet ſhews his great judgment in preparing the reader for the deſtruction of the ſuitors; that great cataſtrophe is managed by few hands, and it might ſeem incredible that ſo few could deſtroy ſo many: the poet therefore, to give an air of truth to his action, frequently inculcates the aſſiſtance of Pallas, which muſt at leaſt ſhew, that ſuch a great exploit is not impoſſible to be executed by ſtratagems and valour: it is by art, not ſtrength, that Ulyſſes conquers.

All Greece in arms.

This is ſpoken in a general ſenſe, and comprehends not only the ſubjects of Ulyſſes, or even the Pylians and Spartans, but implies, that all the Greeks would riſe in the cauſe of Ulyſſes. What the ſuitors had ſpoken ſcoffingly in the preceding book, viz. that Telemachus was ſailing to Pyle or Sparta for ſupplies, appears in this not to be impracticable; ſo that it was choice and not neceſſity that determined the poet to make uſe of no ſuch eaſy expedients for the deſtruction of the ſuitors. Euſtathius.

It may be added, that the very nature of epic poetry, and of the Odyſſey in particular, requires ſuch a conduct: in the Iliad Achilles is the chief agent, and performs almoſt all the great actions; Æneas is painted after the ſame manner by Virgil; the one kills Hector, the other Turnus, both which are the deciſive actions: it was equally neceſſary to exalt the character of Ulyſſes, by bringing him into difficulties from which he is per-

But if Athena, war's triumphant maid,
The happy ſon, will, as the father, aid,
(Whoſe fame and ſafety was her conſtant care
In ev'ry danger and in every war:
Never on man did heav'nly favour ſhine
With rays ſo ſtrong, diſtinguiſh'd and divine,
As thoſe with which Minerva mark'd the ſire)
So might ſhe love thee, ſo thy ſoul inſpire!
Soon ſhould their hopes in humble duſt be laid,
And long oblivion of the bridal bed.
  Ah! no ſuch hope (the prince with ſighs replies)
Can touch my breaſt; that bleſſing heav'n denies.
Ev'n by celeſtial favour were it giv'n,
Fortune or fate would croſs the will of heav'n.

ſonally to extricate himſelf: this the poet ſufficiently brings about, by refuſing all the eaſy methods for his re-eſtabliſhment, becauſe the more difficult ways are moſt conducive to the honour of his hero: thus as Achilles and Æneas kill Hector and Turnus with their own hands, ſo the ſuitors fall chiefly by the hand of Ulyſſes. It is neceſſary for the hero of the poem to execute the deciſive action, for by this method the poet completes his character, his own greatneſs ſurmounts all difficulties, and he goes off the ſtage with the utmoſt advantage, by leaving a noble character upon the mind of the ſpectators.

ỳ. 282. *Fortune or fate would croſs the will of heav'n.*] It may be aſked how an expreſſion ſo near blaſphemy, as Euſtathius obſerves, could eſcape a perſon of ſuch piety as Telemachus? It is true, the poet makes Minerva herſelf correct it; but yet the objection remains, viz. how could Telemachus ſpeak it? I think, ſince

What words are theſe, and what imprudence thine?
(Thus interpos'd the martial maid divine)
Forgetful youth! but know, the Pow'r above
With eaſe can ſave each object of his love;
Wide, as his will, extends his boundleſs grace;
Nor loſt in time, nor circumſcrib'd by place.
Happier his lot, who many ſorrows paſt,
Long-lab'ring gains his natal ſhore at laſt;

the poet himſelf condemns it, we may give it up as an indecency in Telemachus; it is natural for men to deſpair (and that was the condition of Telemachus,) to uſe a vehemence of expreſſion, and this might tranſport Telemachus beyond the bounds of prudence. The only poſſible way that occurs to me to take off the impiety, is to have recourſe to deſtiny: it was the opinion of the antients, that the gods could not alter deſtiny: and then Telemachus may mean no more, than that it was decreed by the Deſtinies that Ulyſſes ſhall return no more, ſo the gods themſelves could not reſtore him.

Thus in the 15th of the Metamorphoſis, Venus in vain applies to the gods to preſerve Julius Caeſar.

——Superoſque movet, qui rumpere quanquam
Ferrea not poſſunt veterum decreta ſororum, etc.

And a little lower Jupiter ſays to Venus,

———— Solo inſuperabile fatum,
Nata, movere paras?

ỳ. 289. *Happier his lot, who*, etc.] Nothing can be better imagined to encourage Telemachus, than what the poet here delivers: ſhe ſets Agamemnon in oppoſition to Ulyſſes: Agamemnon made a ſpeedy voyage to his country, and there fell by treachery; Ulyſſes has long been abſent, but yet is happier than Agamemnon:

Than who too ſpeedy, haſtes to end his life
By ſome ſtern ruffian, or adult'rous wife.
Death only is the lot which none can miſs,
And all is poſſible to heav'n, but this.
The beſt, the deareſt fav'rite of the ſky
Muſt taſte that cup, for man is born to die.
Thus check'd, reply'd Ulyſſes' prudent heir:
Mentor, no more—the mournful thought forbear:
For he no more muſt draw his country's breath,
Already ſnatch'd by fate, and the black doom of death!

the gods perhaps reſerve him for better fortunes, at leaſt nothing can be concluded from his long abſence, and this is ſufficient to teach Telemachus not to deſpair. Euſtathius.

℣. 294. *And all is poſſible to heav'n, but this.*] What Minerva here ſays juſtifies the remark I made, that what Telemachus ſeemed to have ſpoken raſhly, may be ſoftened, if not vindicated, by having recourſe to deſtiny: it is evident from this paſſage, that deſtiny was ſuperior to the power of the gods: otherwiſe Minerva ſpeaks as blaſphemouſly as Telemachus: for, what difference is there between ſaying, that the gods cannot preſerve even theſe they love from death, and ſaying that the gods could not ſave Ulyſſes? Why therefore may not the words of Telemachus be thought to have a reſpect to deſtiny?

I am of opinion, that the poet had ſomething further in view by putting theſe words into the mouth of Minerva: the words of Telemachus, if taken groſly, might appear ſhocking to ſo pious a perſon as Neſtor, and make an ill impreſſion upon him to the diſadvantage of Telemachus; Minerva therefore artfully explains it, and ſoftens the horror of it by reconciling it to the theology of thoſe ages.

Paſs we to other ſubjects; and engage
On themes remote the venerable ſage:
(Who thrice has ſeen the periſhable kind
Of men decay, and through three ages ſhin'd,
Like gods majeſtic, and like gods in mind.)
For much he knows, and juſt concluſions draws
From various precedents, and various laws.

ỳ. 301. *Paſs we to other ſubjects*—] Telemachus here puts ſeveral queſtions, as it were in a breath, to Neſtor: and Plutarch obſerves upon this paſſage, that he who enquires any thing of an old man, though the old man himſelf has no concern in the ſtory, wins his heart at once; and incites a perſon, who is upon all occaſions very willing to diſcourſe. He introduces this as an inſtance of the art Telemachus uſes, in adapting himſelf by his queſtions to the temper of the perſon with whom he converſes: he puts together, continues he, ſeveral queſtions upon ſeveral ſubjects, which is more judicious than to confine his anſwer to a ſingle interrogatory, and by that method deprive Neſtor of one of the moſt pleaſant enjoyments of old age, I mean the pleaſure of talking. Plutarch. Sympoſiac.

ỳ. 303. *Who thrice has ſeen the periſhable kind*
Of men decay,———]

The poet here tells us that Neſtor was now in his fourth generation: Ovid took the word γένεα to ſignify an hundred years; but then Neſtor muſt have been above three hundred years old. Others, with more probability, underſtand it to ſignify a generation, or ſuch a portion of time in which any race of men flouriſh together, which is computed to be about thirty years. I refer the reader to the note upon the thirty-third verſe in the firſt book of the Iliad, for the particular age of Neſtor. According to that computation, he muſt now be about ninty-five years of age.

O ſon of Neleus! awful Neſtor, tell
How he, the mighty, Agamemnon fell?
By what ſtrange fraud Ægyſthus wrought, relate,
(By force he could not) ſuch a hero's fate?
Liv'd Menelaus not in Greece? or where
Was then the martial brother's pious care?
Condemn'd perhaps ſome foreign ſhore to tread;
Or ſure Ægyſthus had not dar'd the deed.

To whom the full of days. Illuſtrious youth,
Attend (though partly thou haſt gueſt) the truth.
For had the martial Menelaus found
The ruffian breathing yet on Argive ground;
Nor earth had hid his carcaſe from the ſkies,
Nor Grecian virgins ſhriek'd his obſequies,
But fowls obſcene diſmember'd his remains,
And dogs had torn him on the naked plains.
While us the works of bloody Mars employ'd,
The wanton youth inglorious peace enjoy'd;
He, ſtretch'd at eaſe in Argos' calm receſs,
(Whoſe ſtately ſteeds luxuriant paſtures bleſs)
With flattery's inſinuating art
Sooth'd the frail queen, and poiſon'd all her heart.

℣. 309. *How he, the mighty, Agamemnon fell?*] Telemachus does not aſk this queſtion out of curioſity, but with great judgment; he knows there were deſigns againſt his life, as well as there had been againſt Agamemnon; he therefore aſks it that he may learn how to defeat them; chiefly to inſtruct himſelf how beſt to aſſiſt his father upon his return, by aiding him in eſcaping the ſnares of the ſuitors. Dacier.

At firſt with worthy ſhame and decent pride,
The royal dame his lawleſs ſuit deny'd.
For virtue's image yet poſſeſt her mind,
Taught by a maſter of the tuneful kind:
Atrides, parting for the Trojan war,
Conſign'd the youthful conſort to his care:

℣. 333. *Taught by a maſter of the tuneful kind.*] Homer, through the whole Odyſſey, ſpeaks much in honour of the art which he himſelf loved, and in which he ſo eminently excelled: from theſe and other paſſages we may learn the ſtate of poetry in thoſe ages: 'Poets, 'ſays Euſtathius, were ranked in the claſs of philoſo-'phers; and the antients made uſe of them as precep-'tors in muſic and morality.' Strabo quotes this very paſſage as an inſtance of the excellence of poetry in forming the ſoul to worthy actions: Ægyſthus could not debauch Clytemneſtra, till he baniſhed the poet, who was her guide and inſtructor.

Various are the conjectures of the antients about the name of the bard here celebrated: ſome, ſays Euſtathius, tell us, it was Chariades, ſome Demodocus, ſome Glaucus, etc. but I paſs them over, becauſe they are conjectures.

There were many degrees of theſe ἀοιδοὶ; ſome were ἀοιδοὶ θρήνων, others ἀοιδοὶ περὶ γάμους: but ſuch bards as are here mentioned were of an higher ſtation, and retained as inſtructors by kings and princes.

I cannot omit one remark of Euſtathius: he tells us, that ſome perſons write that theſe ἀοιδοὶ had their names from hence, ὡς αἰδοῖα μὴ ἔχοντες; exactly reſembling the modern Italian ſingers: madam Dacier is not to be forgiven for paſſing over a remark of ſuch importance; if this be true, it makes a great difference between the antient and modern poets, and is the only advantage I know we have over them.

True to his charge, the bard preſerv'd her long
In honour's limits (ſuch the pow'r of ſong)
But when the gods theſe objects of their hate
Dragg'd to deſtruction by the links of fate;
The bard they baniſh'd from his native ſoil,
And left all helpleſs in a deſart iſle:
There he, the ſweeteſt of the ſacred train,
Sung dying to the rocks, but ſung in vain.
Then virtue was no more (her guard away)
She fell, to luſt a voluntary prey.
Ev'n to the temple ſtalk'd th' adult'rous ſpouſe,
With impious thanks, and mockery of vows,

℣. 344. *Then virtue was no more (her guard away)*
She fell, ———, etc.
There is a fine moral couched in the ſtory of the bard and Clytemneſtra; it admirably paints the advantage we draw from wiſe companions for the improvement of our virtues: Clytemneſtra was chaſte becauſe her inſtructor was wiſe: his wiſdom was an inſuperable guard to her modeſty. It was long before ſhe yielded; virtue and honour had a long conteſt; but ſhe no ſooner yielded to adultery, but ſhe aſſiſted in the murder of her huſband; from whence we way draw another moral, that one vice betrays us into another: and when once the fences of honour are thrown down, we become a prey to every paſſion. Dacier.

℣. 346. *Ev'n to the temple ſtalk'd th' adult'rous ſpouſe.*] Here is a ſurpriſing mixture of religion and impiety: Ægyſthus, upon the accompliſhment of ſo great a crime as adultery, returns thanks to the gods by oblations, as if they had aſſiſted him in the execution of it. Neſtor dwells upon it at large, to ſhew that Ægyſthus great-

With images, with garments, and with gold,
And od'rous fumes from loaded altars roll'd.

Mean time from flaming Troy we cut the way,
With Menelaus, through the curling ſea.
But when to Sunium's ſacred point we came,
Crown'd with the temple of th' Athenian dame;
Atrides' pilot, Phrontes, there expir'd;
(Phrontes, of all the ſons of men admir'd
To ſteer the bounding bark with ſteddy toil,
When the ſtorm thickens, and the billows boil)
While yet he exercis'd the ſteerman's art,
Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart;

ly aggravated his guilt by ſuch a piece of impious devotion. Dacier.

ỳ. 359. *Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart.*] Homer calls the darts of Apollo ἀγανὰ, or gentle; to ſignify that thoſe who die thus ſuddenly, die without pain. Euſtathius.

Dacier complains that ſome critics think Homer worthy of blame for enlarging upon ſo mean a perſon as a pilot. It is a ſufficient anſwer to obſerve, that arts were in high eſteem in thoſe times, and men that were eminent in them were in great honour. Neither were arts then confined as in theſe ages to mean perſonages: no leſs a perſon than Ulyſſes builds a veſſel in the ſequel of the Odyſſey; ſo that this is a falſe piece of delicacy. If Homer be culpable, ſo is Virgil; he gives the genealogy of Palinurus, as well as Homer of Phrontes. Virgil's deſcription is cenſured as too long, Homer concludes his in ſeven lines; and laſtly, Virgil's epiſode has been judged by the critics to be an unneceſſary ornament, and to contribute nothing to the poem; Homer relates the death of Phrontes, to introduce the diſ-

Ev'n with the rudder in his hand, he fell.
To pay whoſe honours to the ſhades of hell,
We check'd our haſte, by pious office bound,
And laid our old companion in the ground.
And now, the rites diſcharg'd, our courſe we keep
Far on the gloomy boſom of the deep :
Soon as Malaea's miſty tops ariſe,
Sudden the thund'rer blackens all the ſkies,
And the winds whiſtle, and the ſurges roll
Mountains on mountains, and obſcure the pole.
The tempeſt ſcatters, and divides our fleet ;
Part, the ſtorm urges on the coaſt of Crete,
Where winding round the rich Cydonian plain,
The ſtreams of Jardan iſſue to the main.
There ſtands a rock, high, eminent and ſteep,
Whoſe ſhaggy brow o'er-hangs the ſhady deep,
And views Gortyna on the weſtern ſide ;
On this rough Auſter drove th' impetuous tide :
With broken force the billows rowl'd away,
And heav'd the fleet into the neighb'ring bay.

perſion of the fleet of Menelaus ; the fleet might well be ſcattered, when it wanted ſo excellent a pilot.

ỳ. 371. *Part, the ſtorm urges on the coaſt of Crete.*] Homer does not amuſe us by relating what became of theſe companions of Menelaus ; he omits this judiciouſly, and follows the thread of his ſtory : Menelaus is the perſon whom the poet has in view ; he therefore paſſes over the ſtory of his companions, to carry on the fable of the poem by leading us directly to Menelaus.

Thus ſav'd from death they gain'd the Phæſtan ſhores,
With ſhatter'd veſſels, and diſabled oars:
But five tall barks the winds and waters toſt
Far from their fellows, on th' Ægyptian coaſt.
There wander'd Menelaus through foreign ſhores,
Amaſſing gold, and gathering naval ſtores;
While curſt Ægyſthus the deteſted deed
By fraud fulfill'd, and his great brother bled.
Sev'n years, the traytor rich Mycenae ſway'd,
And his ſtern rule the groaning land obey'd;
The eighth, from Athens to his realm reſtor'd,
Oreſtes brandiſh'd the revenging ſword,

℣. 383. ——*On th' Ægyptian coaſt.*] In the original it is, *The wind and water carry'd them to Ægyptus.* Homer by Ægyptus means the river Nile, and then it is always uſed in the maſculine gender; the region about it took its name from the river Ægyptus, this is always uſed in the feminine gender; but the country had not received that name in the days of Homer. Euſtathius.

What Dacier adds to this obſervation, may aſſiſt in determining the diſpute concerning the priority of Homer and Heſiod: Heſiod makes mention of the river Nilus; if therefore it be true that Ægyptus had not been called by the name of Nilus in the times of Homer, it is a demonſtration that Heſiod was poſterior to Homer; otherwiſe he could not have been acquainted with any other name but that of Ægyptus.

℣. 390. *From Athens to his realm*—] There is a different reading in this place: inſtead of ἀπ' Ἀθηνάων, ſome write ἀπὸ Φωκήων; for Oreſtes was educated by Strophius king of Phocis, and father of Pylades: the antients reconcile the difference, by ſaying that Oreſtes might be ſent from Phocis to Athens for his education,

Slew the dire pair, and gave to fun'ral flame
The vile aſſaſſin, and adult'rous dame.
That day, ere yet the bloody triumphs ceaſe,
Return'd Atrides to the coaſt of Greece,
And ſafe to Argos' port his navy brought,
With gifts of price and pond'rous treaſure fraught.
Hence warn'd, my ſon beware! nor idly ſtand
Too long a ſtranger to thy native land;
Leſt heedleſs abſence wear thy wealth away,
While lawleſs feaſters in thy palace ſway;
Perhaps may ſeiſe thy realm, and ſhare the ſpoil;
And thou return, with diſappointed toil,
From thy vain journey, to a rifled iſle.
Howe'er, my friend, indulge one labour more,
And ſeek Atrides on the Spartan ſhore.
He, wand'ring long, a wider circle made,
And many languag'd nations has ſurvey'd;
And meaſur'd tracts unknown to other ſhips,
Amid the monſtrous wonders of the deeps;
(A length of ocean and unbounded ſky,
Which ſcarce the ſea-fowl in a year o'erfly)

and returning thence to his own country, might revenge the death of his father Agamemnon; ſo that although he was firſt bred up in Phocis, he was afterwards a ſojourner in Athens. Euſtathius.

ỿ. 411. *A length of ocean and unbounded ſky,*
Which ſcarce the ſea-fowl in a year o'erfly.]
It muſt be confeſt, that Neſtor greatly exaggerates this deſcription: Homer himſelf tells us, that a ſhip may ſail in five days from Crete to Ægypt; wherefore then

Go then; to Sparta take the watry way,
Thy ſhip and ſailors but for orders ſtay;
Or if by land thou chuſe thy courſe to bend,
My ſteeds, my chariots, and my ſons attend;
Thee to Atrides they ſhall ſafe convey,
Guides of thy road, companions of thy way.
Urge him with truth to frame his free replies,
And ſure he will: for Menelaus is wiſe.

Thus while he ſpeaks, the ruddy ſun deſcends,
And twilight grey her ev'ning ſhade extends.
Then thus the blue-ey'd maid: O full of days!
Wiſe are thy words, and juſt are all thy ways.

this hyperbole of Neſtor? It might perhaps be to deter Telemachus from a deſign of ſailing to Crete, and he through his inexperience might believe the deſcription. It may be added, that what Neſtor ſpeaks concerning the flight of birds, may be only ſaid to ſhew the great diſtance of that ſea: nay, by a favourable interpretation it may be reconciled to truth; the meaning then muſt be this: ſhould a perſon obſerve that ſea a whole year, he would not ſee one bird flying over it, both becauſe of the vaſtneſs and dreadfulneſs of it; and perhaps the whole of this might ariſe from the obſervation, that this ſea is not frequented by birds. This is wholly and almoſt literally taken from Euſtathius; and if we add to this the ignorance of the ſea and ſea-affairs in thoſe ages, we ſhall the leſs wonder to hear ſo wiſe a man as Neſtor deſcribing it with ſo much terror; navigation is now greatly improved, and the moderns ſail farther in a month, than the antients could in a year; their whole art conſiſting chiefly in coaſting along the ſhores, and conſequently they made but little way.

Now immolate the tongues, and mix the wine,
Sacred to Neptune and the Pow'rs divine.
The lamp of day is quench'd beneath the deep,
And ſoft approach the balmy hours of ſleep:
Nor fits it to prolong the heav'nly feaſt,
Timeleſs, indecent, but retire to reſt.

℣. 425. *Now immolate the tongues*——] Various are the reaſons which Euſtathius reports concerning this oblation of the tongues at the concluſion of the ſacrifice. It was to purge themſelves from any evil words they might have uttered; or becauſe the tongue was reckoned the beſt part of the ſacrifice, and ſo reſerved for the completion of it; or they offered the tongue to the gods, as witneſſes to what they had ſpoken. I omit the reſt as ſuperfluous. They had a cuſtom of offering the tongues to Mercury, becauſe they believed him the giver of eloquence. Dacier expatiates upon this cuſtom. The people, ſays ſhe, might fear, leſt through wine and the joy of the feſtival they might have uttered ſome words unbecoming the ſanctity of the occaſion: by this ſacrifice of the tongues, they ſignified that they purged away whatever they had ſpoken amiſs during the feſtival; and aſked, in particular, pardon of Mercury, who preſided over diſcourſe, to the end they might not carry home any uncleanneſs which might ſtop the bleſſings expected from the ſacrifice.

℣. 429. *Nor fits it to prolong the heav'nly feaſt,*
Timeleſs, indecent, etc.]
Euſtathius ſhews the difference between ἑορταὶ, feſtivals, and θυσίαι, or ſacrifices: in the former it was cuſtomary to ſpend the whole night in wine and rejoicing: in the latter, this was reckoned an unlawful cuſtom, through the fear of falling into any indecencies through wine. He likewiſe gives another reaſon of this injunction, by telling us that it was the cuſtom to offer ſacrifices to

So ſpake Jove's daughter, the celeſtial maid.
The ſober train attended and obey'd.
The ſacred heralds on their hands around
Pour'd the full urns; the youths the goblets crown'd:
From bowl to bowl the holy bev'rage flows;
While to the final ſacrifice they roſe.
The tongues they caſt upon the fragrant flame,
And pour, above, the conſecrated ſtream.
And now, their thirſt by copious draughts allay'd,
The youthful hero and th' Athenian maid
Propoſe departure from the finiſh'd rite,
And in their hollow bark to paſs the night:
But this the hoſpitable ſage deny'd.
Forbid it, Jove! and all the Gods! he cry'd,
Thus from my walls the much-lov'd ſon to ſend
Of ſuch a hero, and of ſuch a friend!
Me, as ſome needy peaſant, would ye leave,
Whom heav'n denies the bleſſing to relieve?
Me would ye leave, who boaſt imperial ſway,
When beds of royal ſtate invite your ſtay?

the celeſtial powers in the day, and even to finiſh them about the ſetting of the ſun; and that thoſe who dealt in incantations performed their ſacrifices to the infernal Powers by night, and finiſhed them before ſun-riſing. Either of theſe reaſons ſufficiently explains the words of the goddeſs; and the former carries in it an excellent moral, that particular care ſhould be taken in our acts of devotion, not to turn religion into impiety.

ỳ. 450. *When beds of royal ſtate invite your ſtay?*] This paſſage gives us a full inſight into the manners of theſe

No — long as life this mortal ſhall inſpire,
Or as my children imitate their ſire,
Here ſhall the wand'ring ſtranger find his home,
And hoſpitable rites adorn the dome.

Well haſt thou ſpoke, the blue-ey'd maid replies,
Belov'd old man! benevolent, as wiſe. 456
Be the kind dictates of thy heart obey'd,
And let thy words Telemachus perſuade:

hoſpitable ages; they not only kept a treaſury for bowls or vaſes of gold or ſilver, to give as ξεινήια, or gifts of hoſpitality, but alſo a wardrobe of various habits and rich furniture, to lodge and beſtow upon ſtrangers. Euſtathius relates, that Tellias of Agrigentum was a perſon of ſo great hoſpitality, that five hundred horſemen coming to his houſe in the winter ſeaſon, he entertained them, and gave every man a cloke and a tunic. This laudable cuſtom prevailed, and ſtill prevails, in the eaſtern countries: it was the practice of Abraham of old, and is at this day among the Turks, as we may learn from their caravanſaries, erected for the reception of travellers. And yet Dacier obſerves, that a French critic has ſhewed ſo ill a taſte as to ridicule this paſſage. 'Telemachus, ſays that author, being entertained by Neſtor, 'intimates his intention of returning to lodge on ſhipboard with his companions: but Neſtor detains him, 'by aſking if he thought he had not quilts or coverlets 'to give him a night's lodging: upon this Telemachus 'goes to bed in a reſounding gallery, and Neſtor in a 'bed which his wife made ready for him.' The nobleſt things are moſt liable to burleſque, by perverting their meaning; as ſome pictures, by varying the poſition, repreſent a man or a monſter. He is very ſevere upon the *reſounding gallery*, which in truth means no more than very lofty or elevated, and by conſequence very noble and magnificent.

He to thy palace ſhall thy ſteps purſue;
I to the ſhip, to give the orders due,
Preſcribe directions, and confirm the crew.
For I alone ſuſtain their naval cares,
Who boaſt experience from theſe ſilver hairs;
All youths the reſt, whom to this journey move
Like years, like tempers, and their prince's love.
There in the veſſel ſhall I paſs the night;
And ſoon as morning paints the fields of light,
I go to challenge from the Caucons bold,
A debt, contracted in the days of old.

℣. 468. *I go to challenge from the Caucons.*] The poet makes a double uſe of theſe words of the goddeſs; ſhe gives an air of probability to her excuſe, why ſhe ſhould not be preſſed to ſtay; and at the ſame time Homer avoids the abſurdity of introducing that goddeſs at Sparta. Menelaus, and Helen are celebrating the nuptials of their ſon and daughter: Minerva is a virgin deity, and conſequently an enemy to all nuptial ceremonies. Euſtathius.

But it may be neceſſary to obſerve who theſe Caucons are: we find in the tenth book the Caucons mentioned as auxiliaries to Troy: there Dolon ſays,

The Carians, Caucons, the Pelaſgian hoſt,
And Leleges encamp along the coaſt.

Are theſe Caucons the ſame with thoſe here mentioned? Euſtathius informs us that there was a people of Triphyly, between Elis and Pylos, named Caucons: but Strabo ſays, that the whole race is now extinct, and that theſe here mentioned are of Dymaea, and take their name from the river Caucon: whereas thoſe in the Iliad are Paphlagonians: they were a wandering nation,

But this thy gueſt, receiv'd with friendly care,
Let thy ſtrong courſers ſwift to Sparta bear;
Prepare thy chariot at the dawn of day,
And be thy ſon companion of his way.
Then turning with the word, Minerva flies,
And ſoars an eagle through the liquid ſkies.
Viſion divine! The throng'd ſpectators gaze
In holy wonder fixt, and ſtill amaze.
But chief the rev'rend ſage admir'd; he took
The hand of young Telemachus, and ſpoke.
Oh happy youth! and favour'd of the ſkies,
Diſtinguiſh'd care of guardian deities!

and conſequently might be the ſame people originally, and retain the ſame name in different countries.

℣. 478. *But chief the rev'rend ſage admir'd*—] It may be aſked why Neſtor is in ſuch a ſurprize at the diſcovery of the goddeſs: it is evident from the Iliad, that he had been no ſtranger to ſuch intercourſes of the deities; nay, in this very book Neſtor tells us, that Ulyſſes injoyed almoſt the conſtant preſence of Miverva; inſomuch that Sophocles, the great imitator of Homer, relates, that he knew the goddeſs by her voice, without ſeeing her. Euſtathius anſwers, that the wonder of Neſtor aroſe not from the diſcovery of that deity, but that ſhe ſhould accompany ſo young a perſon as Telemachus: after her departure, the old man ſtood amazed, and looked upon that hero as ſome very extraordinary perſon, whom, in ſuch early years, the goddeſs of war and wiſdom had vouchſafed to attend. This interpretation agrees perfectly with what Neſtor ſpeaks to Telemachus.

℣. 481. *Diſtinguiſh'd care of guardian deities.*] I will take this opportunity to obviate an objection that

Whoſe early years for future worth engage,
No vulgar manhood, no ignoble age.
For lo! none other of the court above
Than ſhe, the daughter of almighty Jove,

may be made againſt all interpoſition of the gods in aſſiſting the heroes of the Odyſſey: it has been thought by ſome critics a diſparagement to them to ſtand in continual need of ſuch ſupernatural ſuccour: if two perſons were ingaged in combat, and a third perſon ſhould immediately ſtep in to the aſſiſtance of one of the parties, and kill the adverſary, would it not reflect upon the valour of his friend who was ſo weak as to want ſuch aſſiſtance? Why, for inſtance, ſhould Jupiter help Æneas to kill Turnus? Was not he brave enough to fight, and ſtrong enough to conquer his enemy by his own proweſs? and would not Turnus have killed Æneas with the ſame aſſiſtance? It is therefore a diſparagement to the actors, thus continually to ſupply the defects of a hero, by the power of a deity.

But this is a falſe way of arguing, and from hence it might be inferred, that the love and favour of a deity ſerves only to make thoſe whom he aſſiſts, and thoſe who depend upon ſuch aſſiſtance, appear weak, impotent, cowardly, and unworthy to be conquerors. Can any doubt ariſe whether the love and favour of a god be a diſparagement or honour to thoſe whom he favours? According to theſe critics, we ſhould find the character of a perfect hero in an impious Mezentius, who acknowleges no God but his own arm and his own ſword: it is true, the objection would be juſt, if the hero himſelf performed nothing of the action; or if when he were almoſt conquered by the ſuperior valour of his enemy, he owed his life and victory to gods and miracles: but the hero always behaves himſelf in all his actions, as if he were to gain ſucceſs without the aſſiſtance of the deity; and the preſence of the gods is ſo order-

Pallas herſelf, the war-triumphant maid,
Confeſt is thine, as once thy father's aid.
So guide me, goddeſs! ſo propitious ſhine
On me, my conſort, and my royal line!
A yearling bullock to thy name ſhall ſmoke,
Untam'd, unconſcious of the galling yoke.
With ample forehead, and yet tender horns,
Whoſe budding honours ductile gold adorns.

ed, that we may retrench every thing that is miraculous, without making any alteration in the action or character of the human perſonages. Thus in the inſtance of Æneas and Turnus, though Jupiter favours Æneas, yet Æneas is painted in ſtronger colours of fortitude, he appears ſuperior, as a man unaſſiſted, and able to conquer Turnus; and conſequently the favour of Jupiter makes no alteration in the action or character of Æneas.

There is likewiſe a wide difference between the aſſiſtance of a man, and of a god: the actions of men belong only to the performers of thoſe actions; but when a deity aſſiſts us by inſpiring us with ſtrength and courage, the actions we perform are really our own, and the more he favours us, the more glory he gives us: ſo that the aſſiſtance of man eclipſes, but the aſſiſtance of a god exalts, our glory. Thus, for inſtance, when Achilles is purſuing Hector, he charges the Greeks to keep off from Hector; their aſſiſtance might leſſen his glory: but when Pallas offers her aſſiſtance, he immediately imbraces it as a honour, and boaſts of it as ſuch to Hector. I have been large upon this objection, becauſe the reader ought to carry it in his memory through the whole poem, and apply it to every action, in which any ſhare is aſcribed to any deity. See Boſſu more at large concerning this objection.

Submiſſive thus the hoary ſire preferr'd
His holy vow: the fav'ring goddeſs heard.
Then ſlowly riſing, o'er the ſandy ſpace
Precedes the father, follow'd by his race,
(A long proceſſion) timely marching home
In comely order to the regal dome.
There when arriv'd, on thrones around him plac'd,
His ſons and grand-ſons the wide circle grac'd.
To theſe the hoſpitable ſage, in ſign
Of ſocial welcome, mix'd the racy wine,
(Late from the mellowing caſk reſtor'd to light,
By ten long years refin'd, and roſy-bright.)
To Pallas high the foaming bowl he crown'd,
And ſprinkled large libation on the ground.
Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
And to the gifts of balmy ſleep repairs.
Deep in a rich alcove the prince was laid,
And ſlept beneath the pompous colonnade;
Faſt by his ſide Piſiſtratus lay ſpread,
(In age his equal) on a ſplendid bed:
But in an inner court, ſecurely clos'd,
The rev'rend Neſtor with his queen repos'd.
When now Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With roſy luſtre purpled o'er the lawn;
The old man early roſe, walk'd forth, and ſate
On poliſh'd ſtone before his palace gate:

℣. 518. *And ſate on poliſh'd ſtone before his palace gate.*] We have here an antient cuſtom recorded by the poet;

With unguents ſmooth the lucid marble ſhone,
Where antient Neleus ſat, a ruſtic throne;
But he deſcending to th' infernal ſhade,
Sage Neſtor fill'd it, and the ſceptre ſway'd.
His ſons around him mild obeyſance pay,
And duteous take the orders of the day.
Firſt Echephron and Stratius quit their bed;
Then Perſeus, Aretus, and Thraſymed;
The laſt Piſiſtratus aroſe from reſt:
They came, and near him plac'd the ſtranger gueſt.

a king places himſelf before the gate of his palace upon a ſeat of marble, worn ſmooth by long uſe, ſays Euſtathius, or perhaps ſmoothed exquiſitely by the hand of the workman. What I would chiefly obſerve is, that they placed themſelves thus in the public for the diſpatch of juſtice: we read in the ſcripture of judges *ſitting in the gate;* and that this procedure of Neſtor was for that purpoſe is probable from the expreſſion, *He ſat in the ſeat where Neleus* [μήτωρ, or *conſiliarius,*] *uſed to ſit,* (which ſeems to expreſs his wiſdom in the diſcharge of juſtice.) Neſtor is alſo deſcribed as bearing his ſceptre in his hand, which was never uſed but upon ſome act of regality, in the diſpatch of juſtice, or other ſolemn occaſions. Perhaps, ſays Dacier, theſe ſeats or thrones might be conſecrated with oil, to draw a reverence to the ſeats of juſtice as by an act of religion; but I rather judge, adds ſhe, that no more is meant than to expreſs the ſhining of theſe thrones, they being undoubtedly made of marble.

ỳ. 528. *Piſiſtratus.*] Would I indulge my fancy in a conjecture, I might ſuppoſe that the famous tyrant Pyſiſtratus was deſcended, or borrowed his name from this ſon of Neſtor. Herodotus informs us, as Euſtathius obſerves, that all the Piſiſtrati were originally Pylians. If this be true, we have a very ſtrong evidence

To theſe the ſenior thus declar'd his will:
My ſons! the dictates of your ſire fulfil.
To Pallas firſt of gods, prepare the feaſt,
Who grac'd our rites, a more than mortal gueſt.
Let one, diſpatchful, bid ſome ſwain to lead
A well fed bullock from the graſſy mead;
One ſeek the harbour where the veſſels moor,
And bring thy friends, Telemachus! aſhore,
(Leave only two the gally to attend)
Another to Laerceus muſt we ſend,
Artiſt divine, whoſe ſkilful hands infold
The victim's horn with circumfuſile gold.

that Homer is not all fiction, but that he celebrates the great men of thoſe ages with reality, and only imbelliſhes the true ſtory with the ornaments of poetry.

℣. 540. *Laerceus—Artiſt divine*, etc.] The author of the Parallel quotes this paſſage to prove that Homer was ignorant of the mechanic arts: we have here, ſays he, a gilder with his anvil and hammer; but what occaſion has he for an anvil and hammer in the art of a gilder? Boileau has excellently vindicated Homer from this objection, in his reflections upon Longinus; this gilder was a gold-beater: Neſtor, we ſee, furniſhed the gold, and he beat it into leaves, ſo that he had occaſion to make uſe of his anvil and hammer; the anvil was portable, becauſe the work was not laborious. Our modern travellers aſſure us, that it is at this day the practice in the eaſtern regions, as in Perſia, etc. for the artiſts in metals to carry about with them the whole implements of trade, to the houſe of the perſons where they find employment; it is therefore a full vindication of Homer, to obſerve that the gold this artiſt uſed in gilding, was nothing but gold beat into fine leaves.

The reſt may here the pious duty ſhare,
And bid the handmaids for the feaſt prepare,
The ſeats to range, the fragrant wood to bring,
And limpid waters from the living ſpring.

He ſaid, and buſy each his care beſtow'd;
Already at the gates the bullock low'd,
Already came the Ithacenſian crew,
The dextrous ſmith the tools already drew:
His pond'rous hammer, and his anvil ſound,
And the ſtrong tongs to turn the metal round.
Nor was Minerva abſent from the rite,
She view'd her honours, and enjoy'd the ſight.

ỳ. 552. *Nor was Minerva abſent* —] It may be aſked in what ſenſe Minerva can be ſaid to come to the ſacrifice? Euſtathius anſwers, that the ancients, finding the inclinations of men to be bent incontinently upon pleaſures, to oblige them to uſe them moderately, diſtinguiſhed times, ordained ſacrifices, and repreſenting the gods in the forms of men, brought them to uſe thoſe pleaſures with diſcretion: they taught them that the gods came down to their libations and ſacrifices, to induce them to govern their converſation with reverence and modeſty: thus Jupiter, and the other gods in the Iliads, and Neptune in the Odyſſey, are ſaid to feaſt with the Æthiopians.

If I might be pardoned a conjecture, I would ſuppoſe, that Minerva may, in another ſenſe, be ſaid to come to the ſacrifice; I mean, by her image or ſtatue: and what may ſeem to confirm this opinion, is what Diodorus relates in his third book concerning the abovementioned Æthiopians; they carried about the ſtatues of Jupiter, and the other gods, twelve days, during which time, the gods were ſaid to be gone to the Æthiopians:

With rev'rent hand the king preſents the gold,
Which round th' intorted horns the gilder roll'd;
So wrought, as Pallas might with pride behold.
Young Aretus from forth his bridal bow'r
Brought the full laver, o'er their hands to pour,
And caniſters of conſecrated flour.
Stratius and Echephron the victim led;
The ax was held by warlike Thraſymed,
In act to ſtrike: before him Perſeus ſtood,
The vaſe extending to receive the blood.

and if the gods may be ſaid to come to the Æthiopians by their ſtatues, why may not the ſame be ſaid of Minerva, from the introduction of her ſtatue among the Pylians? So that the appearance of the goddeſs may poſſibly mean the appearance of her ſtatue.

℣. 560. *Stratius and Echephron*, etc.] Neſtor here makes uſe only of the miniſtry of his ſons; the reaſon of it is, becauſe it was reckoned honourable to ſerve in the performance of ſacrifice, this being in ſome ſenſe an attending upon the gods: or becauſe it was the practice of thoſe ages for great perſons to do thoſe offices with their own hands, which in the latter have been performed by ſervants.

Euſtathius reports a ſaying of Antigonus, who obſerving his ſon behave himſelf imperiouſly to his ſubjects, 'Knoweſt thou not, ſays he, that royalty itſelf is but 'illuſtrious ſervitude!' an intimation that he himſelf was but a ſervant of the public, and therefore ſhould uſe his ſervants with moderation.

But the true reaſon of Neſtor's aſſiſting in the ſacrifice is, becauſe kings anciently had the inſpection of religion, and prieſthood was joined to royalty, according to that of Virgil,

Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phoebique ſacerdos.

The king himſelf initiates to the pow'r;
Scatters with quiv'ring hand the ſacred flour,
And the ſtream ſprinkles: from the curling brows
The hair collected in the fire he throws.
Soon as due vows on ev'ry part were pay'd,
And ſacred wheat upon the victim lay'd,
Strong Thraſymed diſcharg'd the ſpeeding blow
Full on his neck, and cut the nerves in two.
Down ſunk the heavy beaſt: the females round
Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a ſhrilling ſound.
Nor ſcorn'd the queen the holy choir to join,
(The firſt born ſhe, of old Clymenus' line;

ỳ. 573. *Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a ſhrilling ſound.*] I have kept the meaning of the word in the original, which ſignifies prayers made with loud cries, ὀλόλυξαν. ὀλολύξη, ſays Heſychius, is, φωνὴ γυναικῶν ἣν ποιοῦνται ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐχόμεναι, *the voice of women, which they make at their ſacrifices in their prayers.* But there is ſtill ſomething in it more to the preſent purpoſe; the ſcholiaſt upon Æſchylus remarks, that this word is not uſed properly but when applied to the prayers offered to Minerva; for Minerva is the only goddeſs to whom prayers are made with loud cries, ſhe being the goddeſs of war; to other deities they offer prayer with thankſgiving; ὃ γὰρ μόνη τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ δαιμονι ὔσῃ πολεμικῇ ὀλολύζυσι, τοῖς δ' ἄλλοις Θεοῖς παιωνίζυσι.

Thus alſo in the ſixth book of the Iliads, verſe 301.

Αἵ δ' ὀλολυγῇ πᾶσαι Ἀθήνῃ χεῖρας ἀνέσχον.

They fill the dome with ſupplicating cries.

And in the preſent paſſage in the Odyſſey,

------ αἵ δ' ὀλόλυξαν
Θυγατέρες τε, νυοί τε, etc. Dacier.

In youth by Neſtor lov'd, of ſpotleſs fame,
And lov'd in age, Eurydice her name)
From earth they rear him, ſtruggling now with death;
And Neſtor's youngeſt ſtops the vents of breath.
The ſoul for ever flies: on all ſides round
Streams the black blood, and ſmokes upon the ground.
The beaſt they then divide, and diſ-unite
The ribs and limbs, obſervant of the rite:
On theſe, in double cawls involv'd with art,
The choiceſt morſels lay from ev'ry part.
The ſacred ſage before his altar ſtands,
Turns the burnt-off'ring with his holy hands,
And pours the wine, and bids the flames aſpire:
The youth with inſtruments ſurround the fire.
The thighs now ſacrific'd, and entrails dreſt,
Th' aſſiſtants part, tranfix, and broil the reſt.
While theſe officious tend the rites divine,
The laſt fair branch of the Neſtorian line
Sweet Polycaſte, took the pleaſing toil
To bathe the prince, and pour the fragrant oil.

℣. 594. *Sweet Polycaſte, took the pleaſing toil*
To bathe the prince, etc.]

It is very neceſſary to ſay ſomething about this practice of women bathing and anointing men; it frequently occurs through the whole Odyſſey, and is ſo contrary to the uſage of the moderns, as to give offence to modeſty; neither is this done by women of inferior quality, but we have here a young princeſs, bathing, anointing, and cloathing the naked Telemachus. Euſtathius indeed tells us, it was undoubtedly by her father's com-

O'er his fair limbs a flow'ry veſt he threw,
And iſſu'd, like a god, to mortal view.
His former ſeat beſide the king he found,
(His people's father with his peers around)
All plac'd at eaſe the holy banquet join,
And in the dazling goblet laughs the wine.

The rage of thirſt and hunger now ſuppreſt,
The monarch turns him to his royal gueſt;
And for the promis'd journey bids prepare
The ſmooth-hair'd horſes, and the rapid car,
Obſervant of his word. The word ſcarce ſpoke,
The ſons obey, and join them to the yoke.
Then bread and wine a ready handmaid brings,
And preſents, ſuch as ſuit the ſtate of kings.
The glitt'ring ſeat Telemachus aſcends;
His faithful guide Piſiſtratus attends:

mand: but if it was a piece of immodeſty, it does not ſolve the objection, whoever commanded it. I confeſs it would be immodeſt in theſe ages of the world, and the only excuſe that occurs to me is, to ſay that cuſtom eſtabliſhed it. It is in manners, in ſome degree, as in dreſs; if a faſhion never ſo indecent prevails, yet no perſon is ridiculous, becauſe it is faſhonable: ſo in manners, if a practice prevails univerſally, though not reconcilable to real modeſty, yet no perſon can be ſaid to be immodeſt who comes into it, becauſe it is agreeable to the cuſtom of the times and countries.

ỳ. 610, etc. *The concluſion of the book.*] I ſhall lay together what I have further to obſerve on the concluſion of this book: it is remarkable, that the poet does not amuſe himſelf in deſcribing the preſent he received from Neſtor, or the proviſions for the journey, or even

With haſty hand the ruling reins he drew:
He laſh'd the courſers, and the courſers flew.
Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
Their equal pace, and ſmoak'd along the field.
The tow'rs of Pylos ſink, its views decay,
Fields after fields fly back, till cloſe of day:
Then ſunk the ſun, and darken'd all the way.
To Pherae now, Diocleus' ſtately ſeat,
(Of Alpheus' race) the weary youths retreat.
His houſe affords the hoſpitable rite,
And pleas'd they ſleep (the bleſſing of the night.)

the journey itſelf at large; he diſpatches the whole in a few lines very judiciouſly; he carries his hero directly to Menelaus, who is to furniſh many incidents that contribute to the deſign of the poem, and paſſes over other matters as unneceſſary.

We have here likewiſe a piece of poetical geography, and learn that it is exactly two days journey from Pyle to Lacedaemon.

This book takes up three days; the firſt is ſpent in the inquiries Telemachus makes of Neſtor concerning Ulyſſes; the two laſt in the morning ſacrifice at Pylos, and in the journey of Telemachus to Lacedaemon; ſo that five days have now paſſed ſince the opening of the poem. I have ſaid nothing about the ſacrifice, though it be the moſt exact deſcription of the ſacrifices, as practiſed by the ancients, perhaps extant in any author; I refer to the obſervations upon the firſt book of the Iliad.

I would here remark that the three firſt books are written with the utmoſt ſimplicity; there has been no room for ſuch exalted ſtrokes of poetry as are to be found in the Iliad, or in the future parts of the Odyſſey: But this is not owing to the decay of genius in Homer,

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With roſy luſtre purpled o'er the lawn;
Again they mount, their journey to renew,
And from the ſounding portico they flew.
Along the waving fields their way they hold,
The fields receding as the chariot roll'd:
Then ſlowly ſunk the ruddy globe of light,
And o'er the ſhaded landſcape ruſh'd the night.

as ſome critics have affirmed, (who look upon the Odyſſey as bearing marks of his declining years,) but to the nature of the ſubject. The characters of Achilles and Ulyſſes are both very great, but very different. The Iliad conſiſts of battles, and a continual commotion; the Odyſſey in patience and wiſdom: and conſequently the ſtile of the two poems muſt be as different as the characters of the two heroes. A noble fountain of poetry opens in the next book, and flows with an uninterrupted courſe almoſt through the whole Odyſſey.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The conference with Menelaus.

Telemachus with Piſiſtratus arriving at Sparta, is hoſpitably received by Menelaus, to whom he relates the cauſe of his coming, and learns from him many particulars of what befel the Greeks ſince the deſtruction of Troy. He dwells more at large upon the prophecies of Proteus to him in his return, from which he acquaints Telemachus, that Ulyſſes is detained in the iſland of Calypſo.

In the mean time the ſuitors conſult to deſtroy Telemachus in his voyage home. Penelope is apprized of this, but comforted in a dream by Pallas, in the ſhape of her ſiſter Ipthima.

AND now proud Sparta with their wheels reſounds,
Sparta whoſe walls a range of hills ſurrounds:
At the fair dome the rapid labour ends;
Where ſat Atrides 'midſt his bridal friends,

Ariſtotle in his Poetics reports, that certain antient critics reproached Homer for an indecency in making Telemachus take his abode with Menelaus, and not with his own grandfather Icarius: this monſieur Dacier ſufficiently anſwers, by ſhewing that Icarius had ſettled himſelf in Acarnania, and not in Lacedaemon.

With double vows invoking Hymen's pow'r,
To bleſs his ſons and daughters nuptial hour.

℣. 5. ——*invoking Hymen's pow'r.*] Athenaeus has been very ſevere upon this paſſage, as Euſtathius obſerves, and Dacier from Euſtathins.

Ariſtarchus, ſays Athenaeus, miſguides us, the words τὸν δ' εὗρον δαινύντα led him info an error; whereas the marriage is completed, the wedded couple gone away from Menelaus, and he and Helen at Lacedaemon. The five verſes, continues he (the fifteenth to the twentieth incluſively) are taken from the eighteenth book of the Iliads, and inſerted very improperly in this place by Ariſtarchus. Athenaeus gives ſeveral reaſons for his opinion, as that muſic and dancing were very contrary to the ſevere manners of the Lacedaemonians; beſides, the dance was a Cretan dance, how then could it be practiſed among the Spartans? The poet mentions neither the name of the bard, nor one word of the ſubject of the ſongs: neither can the words μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες be applied at all to the dancers, but to the muſicians; and laſtly, it is not to be imagined, that Telemachus and Piſiſtratus ſhould be ſo unpolite, as not to be at all affected with the muſic, had there been any, and yet break out into ſuch wonder at the ſight of the beauty of the palace of Menelaus. Ariſtarchus, adds he, thought the deſcription of the wedding of the ſon and daughter of a king was too meanly and conciſely deſcribed, and therefore made this addition.

But it is eaſy to refute Athenaeus, and vindicate Ariſtarchus. Athenaeus underſtood πέμπε and ἦγετο in the wrong tenſe; they are of the imperfect, *he was ſending*, or *about to ſend*, and not *had ſent*, etc. If the marriage had been abſolutely finiſhed, why ſhould Minerva abſent herſelf from Menelaus, when the celebration of the nuptials is the only reaſon of the abſence of that goddeſs? and as for muſic and dancing being contrary to the ſe-

That day, to great Achilles' ſon reſign'd
Hermione, (the faireſt of her kind)

vere manners of the Lacedaemonians, this is all conjecture: Menelaus lived more than three hundred years before Lycurgus; and becauſe ſuch diverſions were forbid in Sparta, in the days of Lycurgus, muſt it follow, that they were not uſed in thoſe of Menelaus? And ſhould it be granted that muſic and dancing were not uſed in his times, might he not relax a little from the ſeverity of his times, upon ſuch an occaſion of joy as the marriage of a ſon and daughter? I am ſure theſe diverſions are not more contrary to the ſeverity of the Spartans, than the magnificence of the palace of Menelaus was to their ſimplicity. 'But he does not name 'the bard, or the ſubject of his ſongs.' But is this a reaſon why the verſes are ſpurious? we ſhould rather admire the judgment of the poet, who, having ſo fair an opportunity to deſcribe theſe nuptials, yet rejects the temptation, diſmiſſes the whole in a few lines, and follows where this ſubject leads him. The objection about the dance being Cretan is not more valid: Menelaus, as we may learn from the preceding book, had been in Crete, and might bring it thence to Lacedaemon. And as for the criticiſm upon ἐξάρχοντες, it is but a fallacy; Caſaubon has ſhewn, beyond contradiction, that ἐξάρχειν is applied indifferently to all thoſe who give example to others; and conſequently may be applied to dancers as well as muſicians. It may be further added, that although it ſhould be allowed, that the word ἐξάρχειν is only properly applied to muſic, yet in this place the word would not be improperly applied to dancers; for the dancers, without uſurping upon the province of the ſinger might μολπῆς ἐξάρχειν, or chuſe thoſe ſongs, to which they deſired to dance, as is the uſage at this day.

Diodorus is of opinion, that the whole twelve lines after the ſecond to the fifteenth are not genuine; but

Was ſent to crown the long-protracted joy,
Eſpous'd before the final doom of Troy:
With ſteeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nymph to Phthia's diſtant reign.
Mean-while at home, to Megapenthes' bed
The virgin-choir Alector's daughter led.
Brave Megapenthes, from a ſtol'n amour
To great Atrides' age his hand-maid bore:
To Helen's bed the gods alone aſſign
Hermione, t'extend the regal line;
On whom a radiant pomp of Graces wait,
Reſembling Venus in attractive ſtate.

While this gay friendly troop the king ſurround,
With feſtival and mirth the roofs reſound:
A bard amid the joyous circle ſings
High airs, attemper'd to the vocal ſtrings;
Whilſt warbling to the varied ſtrain, advance
Two ſprightly youths to form the bounding dance.
'Twas then, that iſſuing through the palace gate
The ſplendid car roll'd ſlow in regal ſtate:
On the bright eminence young Neſtor ſhone,
And faſt beſide him great Ulyſſes' ſon:
Grave Eteoneus ſaw the pomp appear,
And ſpeeding, thus addreſs'd the royal ear.

Two youths approach, whoſe ſemblant features prove
Their blood devolving from the ſource of Jove.

what has been ſaid of Athenaeus, may be applied to Diodorus.

Is due reception deign'd, or muſt they bend
Their doubtful courſe to ſeek a diſtant friend?

Inſenſate! with a ſigh the king replies,
Too long, miſ-judging, have I thought thee wiſe:
But ſure relentleſs folly ſteels thy breaſt,
Obdurate to reject the ſtranger-gueſt;
To thoſe dear hoſpitable rites a foe,
Which in my wand'rings oft reliev'd my woe:
Fed by the bounty of another's board,
'Till pitying Jove my native realm reſtor'd—
Strait be the courſers from the car releaſt,
Conduct the youths to grace the genial feaſt.

The ſeneſhal rebuk'd in haſte withdrew;
With equal haſte a menial train purſue:
Part led the courſers, from the car enlarg'd,
Each to a crib with choiceſt grain ſurcharg'd;
Part in a portico, profuſely grac'd
With rich magnificence, the chariot plac'd:

ỿ. 37. *Menelaus blames Eteoneus.*] This is the firſt appearance of Menelaus; and ſurely nothing can more reconcile him to the favour of the ſpectators, than thoſe amiable colours in which the poet paints him. There is an overflow of humanity and gratitude in his expreſſions, like that of Dido in Virgil,

Non ignara mali miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.

They contain a fine piece of morality, and teach that thoſe men are more tender-hearted and humane who have felt the reverſe of fortune, than thoſe who have only lived in a condition of proſperity.

Then to the dome the friendly pair invite,
Who eye the dazling roofs with vaſt delight;
Reſplendent as the blaze of ſummer-noon,
Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
From room to room their eager view they bend;
Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, deſcend;
Where a bright damſel-train attend the gueſts
With liquid odours, and embroider'd veſts.
Refreſh'd, they wait them to the bow'r of ſtate,
Where circled with his peers Atrides ſate:
Thron'd next the king, a fair attendant brings
The pureſt product of the chryſtal ſprings:
High on a maſſy vaſe of ſilver mold,
The burniſh'd laver flames with ſolid gold:
In ſolid gold the purple vintage flows,
And on the board a ſecond banquet roſe.
When thus the king with hoſpitable port:—
Accept this welcome to the Spartan court;
The waſte of nature let the feaſt repair,
Then your high lineage and your names declare:
Say from what ſcepter'd anceſtry ye claim,
Recorded eminent in deathleſs fame?
For vulgar parents cannot ſtamp their race
With ſignatures of ſuch majeſtic grace.
Ceaſing, benevolent he ſtrait aſſigns
The royal portion of the choiceſt chines
To each accepted friend: with grateful haſte
They ſhare the honours of the rich repaſt.

Suffic'd, ſoft whiſpering thus to Neſtor's ſon,
His head reclin'd, young Ithacus begun.
  View'ſt thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd moſt!
Theſe prodigies of art, and wond'rous coſt!
Above, beneath, around the palace ſhines
The ſumleſs treaſure of exhauſted mines:
The ſpoils of elephants the roofs inlay,
And ſtudded amber darts a golden ray:
Such, and not nobler, in the realms above
My wonder dictates is the dome of Jove.
  The monarch took the word, and grave reply'd.
Preſumptuous are the vaunts, and vain the pride

℣. 81. *Soft-whiſpering thus to Neſtor's ſon.*] This may be thought a circumſtance of no importance, and very trivial in Telemachus; but it ſhews his addreſs and decency: he whiſpers, to avoid the appearance of a flatterer, or to conceal his own inexperience, in ſhewing too much ſurprize at the magnificence of the palace of Menelaus. Euſtathius.

℣. 91. *The monarch took the word,* etc.] The antients, ſays Euſtathius, obſerve the prudence of Menelaus, in his reply to Telemachus; and the prudence of Telemachus in his behaviour to Menelaus: Menelaus denies not his riches and magnificence, but to take off the envy which they might attract, he throws the calamities he has undergone into the contrary ſcale, and balances his felicity with his misfortunes: and Telemachus coming into the palace at the time of an entertainment, chuſes to ſatisfy his curioſity rather than his appetite. Plutarch, I confeſs, condemns Telemachus of inexperience; who, when he ſaw the palace of Neſtor furniſhed only with things uſeful to life, as beds, tables, etc. is ſeized with no admiration; but the ſuper-

Of man, who dares in pomp with Jove contest,
Unchang'd, immortal, and supremely blest!
With all my affluence when my woes are weigh'd,
Envy will own, the purchase dearly paid.
For eight slow-circling years by tempests tost,
From Cyprus to the far Phoenician coast,
(Sidon the capital) I stretch'd my toil
Through regions fatten'd with the flows of *Nile.*
Next, Æthiopia's utmost bound explore,
And the parch'd borders of th' Arabian shore:

fluities of Menelaus, his ivory, amber, and gold, etc. carry him into transports: whereas a Socrates or a Diogenes would have exclaimed, What heaps of vanities have I beheld! It is true, such a judgment might become philosophers; but who, as Dacier observes, can think the character of a Socrates, or a Diogenes, suitable to young Telemachus? What is decent in a prince, and a young man, would ill become the gravity and wisdom of a philosopher.

ỳ. 100. *Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile. Next Æthiopia, etc.*

The words are in the original Αἰγυπτίυς ἐπαλήθεις; others read them Αἰγυπτίυς ἐπ' ἀληθεῖς, from their veracity in oracles, for which they were very famous; and indeed the word ἐπαλήθεις is not necessary, it being used in the very same sentence, though it must be confessed such repetitions are frequent in Homer. There is also a different reading of the word ἐρέμβυς; some have it ἐρέμνυς, or *blacks*; others, Σιδονίυς Ἀράβας τε; but the common reading is thought the best. The Erembi are the Arabian Troglodytes. Strabo informs us, that in former ages the bounds of the Æthiopians lay near to Thebes in Ægypt, so that Menelaus travelling to Thebes, might with ease visit the Æthiopians. Others have, without

Then warp my voyage on the ſouthern gales,
O'er the warm Lybian wave to ſpread my ſails:
That happy clime! where each revolving year
The teeming ewes a triple offspring bear;
And two fair creſcents of tranſlucent horn
The brows of all their young increaſe adorn:

any foundation, imagined that he paſſed the ſtreights of Gibraltar, and ſailed to the Indies. Sidon is the capital of the Phoenicians. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 105. ——— *Where each revolving year*
The teeming ewes, etc.]

Theſe ſheep, as deſcribed by Homer, may be thought the creation of the poet, and not the production of nature: but Herodotus, ſays Euſtathius, writes, that in Scythia the oxen have no horns through the extremity of the cold: he quotes this very verſe, rightly intimating, adds Herodotus, that in hot regions the horns of cattle ſhoot very ſpeedily. Ariſtotle directly aſſerts, that in Lybia the young ones of horned cattle have horns immediately after they are brought into the world. So that Ariſtotle and Herodotus vindicate Homer. The poet adds, that the ſheep breed three times in the year; theſe words may have a different interpretation, and imply that they breed in three ſeaſons of the year, and not only in the ſpring, as in other countries; or that the ſheep have at once three lambs; but the firſt is the better interpretation. Athenaeus upon this paſſage writes, that there are things in other countries no leſs ſtrange than what Homer relates of theſe ſheep of Libya. Thus in Luſitania, a country of Spain, now Portugal, there is a wonderful fruitfulneſs in all cattle, by reaſon of the excellent temper of the air; the fruits there never rot, and the roſes, violets, and aſparagus, never fail above three months in the year. Euſtathius.

The shepherd swains with sure abundance blest,
On the fat flock and rural dainties feast;
Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
But every season fills the foaming pail.
Whilst heaping unwish'd wealth, I distant roam;
The best of brothers, at his natal home,
By the dire fury of a traitress wife,
Ends the sad evening of a stormy life:
Whence with incessant grief my soul annoy'd,
These riches are possess'd, but not enjoy'd!

ỳ. 114. *The best of brothers,——— ——— a traitress wife.*] Menelaus neither mentions Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, nor Ægysthus by name; a just indignation and resentment is the occasion of his suppressing the names of Clytemnestra and Ægysthus. Through the whole Iliad Menelaus is described as a very affectionate brother, and the love he bears Agamemnon is the reason why he passes by his name in silence. We see that he dispatches the whole in one verse and a half; Nestor had told the story pretty largely in the preceding book, and as he was a person less nearly concerned, might speak of it with more ease and better temper than Menelaus; the poet avoids a needless repetition, and a repetition too of a story universally known to all the Greeks. The death of Agamemnon is distributed into four places in the Odyssey; Nestor, Menelaus, Proteus, and the shade of Agamemnon in the 11th book, all relate it, and every one very properly. Proteus as a prophet more fully than Nestor and Menelaus, and Agamemnon more fully than them all, as being best acquainted with it. Eustathius.

My wars, the copious theme of ev'ry tongue,
To you, your fathers have recorded long:
How fav'ring heav'n repaid my glorious toils
With a sack'd palace, and barbaric spoils.
Oh! had the gods so large a boon deny'd,
And life, the just equivalent, supply'd
To those brave warriors, who with glory fir'd,
Far from their country in my cause expir'd!
Still in short intervals of pleasing woe,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,

y. 119. *My wars the copious theme*, etc.] In the original Menelaus says, *I have destroyed a house*, etc. There is an ambiguity in the expression, as Eustathius observes: for it may either signify the *house of Priam*, or his own in Argos; if it be understood of his own, then the meaning is, 'I have indeed great wealth, but have purchased it with the loss of my people; I could be content with the third part of it, if I could restore those to life who have perished before Troy.' If it be understood of the kingdom of Priam, the regret he shews will still appear the greater. He is enumerating his domestic happiness, and his foreign conquest of Troy; but he throws the destruction of so many brave men who fell before it, in the contrary scale; and it so far outweighs both his wealth and his glory, that they both are joyless to him. Either of these interpretations shew an excellent temper of humanity in Menelaus, who thinks the effusion of blood too dear a price for glory. At the same time the poet gives an admirable picture of human nature, which is restless in the pursuit of what it miscalls happiness, and when in possession of it neglects it. But the disquiet of Menelaus arises not from inconstancy of temper, but wisdom; it shews that all happiness is unsatisfactory.

I to the glorious dead, for ever dear!
Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear.
But oh! Ulyſſes—deeper than the reſt
That ſad idea wounds my anxious breaſt!
My heart bleeds freſh with agonizing pain;
The bowl, and taſteful viands tempt in vain,
Nor ſleep's ſoft pow'r can cloſe my ſtreaming eyes,
When imag'd to my ſoul his ſorrows riſe.
No peril in my cauſe he ceas'd to prove,
His labours equall'd only by my love:
And both alike to bitter fortune born,
For him, to ſuffer, and for me to mourn!
Whether he wanders on ſome friendleſs coaſt,
Or glides in Stygian gloom a penſive ghoſt,

ỳ. 131. *But oh! Ulyſſes*——, etc.] It is with admirable addreſs that the poet falls into his ſubject; it is art, but it ſeems to be nature: this conduct has a double effect, it takes away all ſuſpicion of flattery, for Menelaus is ignorant that the perſon with whom he diſcourſes is Telemachus; this gives him a manifeſt evidence of the love he bears to Ulyſſes; the young man could not but be pleaſed with the praiſe of his father, and with the ſincerity of it. It is alſo obſervable, that Menelaus builds his friendſhip for Ulyſſes upon a noble foundation; I mean the ſufferings which Ulyſſes underwent for his friend: Menelaus aſcribes not their affection to any familiarity or intercourſe of entertainments, but to a more ſincere cauſe, to the hazards which brave men undertake for a friend. In ſhort, the friendſhip of Menelaus and Ulyſſes is the friendſhip of heroes. Euſtathius.

No fame reveals; but doubtful of his doom,
His good old ſire with ſorrow to the tomb
Declines his trembling ſteps; untimely care
Withers the blooming vigour of his heir;
And the chaſte partner of his bed and throne,
Waſtes all her widow'd hours in tender moan.
While thus pathetic to the prince he ſpoke,
From the brave youth the ſtreaming paſſion broke:
Studious to veil the grief, in vain repreſt,
His face he ſhrouded with his purple veſt:
The conſcious monarch pierc'd the coy diſguiſe,
And view'd his filial love with vaſt ſurprize:
Dubious to preſs the tender theme, or wait
To hear the youth enquire his father's fate.
In this ſuſpenſe bright Helen grac'd the room;
Before her breath'd a gale of rich perfume.

ỿ. 157. ——*Bright Helen grac'd the room.*] Menelaus conjectured that the perſon he had entertained was the ſon of Ulyſſes, from the tears he ſhed at the name of his father, and from the reſemblance there was between Ulyſſes and Telemachus; it might therefore have been expected that Menelaus ſhould immediately have acknowleged Telemachus, and not delayed a full diſcovery one moment, out of regard to his abſent friend; but Menelaus defers it upon a twofold account, to give ſome time to Telemachus to indulge his ſorrow for his father, and recover himſelf from it, and alſo to avoid the repetition of a diſcovery upon the appearance of Helen, who would be curious to know the condition of the ſtrangers.

It may be neceſſary to ſay ſomething concerning He-

So moves, adorn'd with each attractive grace,
The silver-shafted goddess of the chace!
The seat of majesty Adraste brings,
With art illustrious, for the pomp of kings.
To spread the pall beneath the regal chair
Of softest woof, is bright Alcippe's care.
A silver canister divinely wrought,
In her soft hands the beauteous Phylo brought:
To Sparta's queen of old the radiant vase
Alcandra gave, a pledge of royal grace:

len, that fatal beauty that engaged Greece and Asia in arms; she is drawn in the same colours in the Odyssey as in the Iliad; it is a vicious character, but the colours are so admirably softened by the art of the poet, that we pardon her infidelity. Menelaus is an uncommon instance of conjugal affection, he forgives a wife who had been false to him, and receives her into a full degree of favour. But perhaps the reader might have been shocked at it, and prejudiced against Helen as a person that ought to be forgot, or have her name only mentioned to disgrace it: the poet therefore, to reconcile her to his reader, brings her in as a penitent, condemning her own infidelity in very strong expressions; she shews true modesty, when she calls herself impudent, and by this conduct we are inclined, like Menelaus, to forgive her.

℣. 161, etc. *Adraste, Alcippe, Helen's maids.*] It has been observed, that Helen has not the same attendants in the Odyssey as she had in the Iliad; they perhaps might be Trojans, and consequently be left in their own country; or rather it was an act of prudence in Menelaus, not to suffer those servants about her who had been her attendants and confidents in her infidelity. Eustathius.

For Polybus her lord, (whoſe ſovereign ſway
The wealthy tribes of Pharian Thebes obey)
When to that court Atrides came, pareſt
With vaſt munificence th' imperial gueſt:
Two lavers from the richeſt ore refin'd,
With ſilver tripods, the kind hoſt aſſign'd;
And bounteous, from the royal treaſure told
Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.
Alcandra, conſort of his high command,
A golden diſtaff gave to Helen's hand;
And that rich vaſe, with living ſculpture wrought,
Which heap'd with wool the beauteous Phylo brought:
The ſilken fleece impurpled for the loom,
Rival'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom.
The ſovereign ſeat then Jove-born Helen preſs'd,
And pleaſing thus her ſceptred lord addreſs'd.
  Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair,
Speak they their lineage, or their names declare?
Uncertain of the truth, yet uncontroul'd
Hear me the bodings of my breaſt unfold.
With wonder rapt, on yonder cheek I trace
The feature of the Ulyſſean race:
Diffus'd o'er each reſembling line appear,
In juſt ſimilitude, the grace and air
Of young Telemachus! the lovely boy,
Who bleſs'd Ulyſſes with a father's joy,

ℽ. 192. ——— *The grace and air*
Of young Telemachus!]
It may ſeem ſtrange that Helen ſhould at firſt view re-

What time the Greeks combin'd their ſocial arms,
T' avenge the ſtain of my ill-fated charms!
Juſt is thy thought, the King aſſenting cries,
Methinks Ulyſſes ſtrikes my wond'rous eyes:
Full ſhines the father in the filial frame,
His port, his features, and his ſhape the ſame;
Such quick regards his ſparkling eyes beſtow;
Such wavy ringlets o'er his ſhoulders flow!
And when he heard the long diſaſtrous ſtore
Of cares, which in my cauſe Ulyſſes bore;
Diſmay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes,
Above reſtraint the tide of ſorrow roſe:
Cautious to let the guſhing grief appear,
His purple garment veil'd the falling tear.
See there confeſt, Piſiſtratus replies,
The genuine worth of Ithacus the wiſe!
Of that heroic ſire the youth is ſprung,
But modeſt awe hath chain'd his tim'rous tongue.
Thy voice, O King! with pleas'd attention heard,
Is like the dictates of a God rever'd.
With him at Neſtor's high command I came,
Whoſe age I honour with a parent's name.

collect the features of Ulyſſes in Telemachus; and that Menelaus, who was better acquainted with him, and his conſtant friend, ſhould not make the ſame obſervation. But Athenaeus, to reconcile this to probability, ſays, that women are curious and ſkilful obſervers of the likeneſs of children to parents, for one particular reaſon, that they may, upon finding any diſſimilitude, have the pleaſure of hinting at the unchaſtity of others.

By adverſe deſtiny conſtrain'd to ſue
For counſel and redreſs, he ſues to you.
Whatever ill the friendleſs orphan bears,
Bereav'd of parents in his infant years,
Still muſt the wrong'd Telemachus ſuſtain,
If hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain:
Affianc'd in your friendly pow'r alone,
The youth would vindicate the vacant throne.

Is Sparta bleſt, and theſe deſiring eyes
View my friend's ſon? (the King exulting cries)
Son of my friend, by glorious toils approv'd,
Whoſe ſword was ſacred to the man he lov'd:
Mirror of conſtant faith, rever'd, and mourn'd! —
When Troy was ruin'd, had the chief return'd,
No Greek an equal ſpace had e'er poſſeſt
Of dear affection, in my grateful breaſt.
I, to confirm the mutual joys we ſhar'd,
For his abode a capital prepar'd;
Argos the ſeat of ſovereign rule I choſe;
Fair in the plan the future palace roſe,
Where my Ulyſſes and his race might reign,
And portion to his tribes the wide domain.

ỳ. 234. *For his abode a capital prepar'd.*] The poet puts theſe words in the mouth of Menelaus, to expreſs the ſincerity of his friendſhip to Ulyſſes; he intended him all advantage, and no detriment: we muſt therefore conclude, that Ulyſſes was ſtill to retain his ſovereignty over Ithaca, and only remove to Argos, to live with ſo ſincere a friend as Menelaus. Euſtathius.

To them my vaſſals had reſign'd a ſoil,
With teeming plenty to reward their toil.
There with commutual zeal we both had ſtrove
In acts of dear benevolence, and love:
Brothers in peace, not rivals in command,
And death alone diſſolv'd the friendly band!
Some envious pow'r the bliſsful ſcene deſtroys;
Vaniſh'd are all the viſionary joys:
The ſoul of friendſhip to my hope is loſt,
Fated to wander from his natal coaſt!
    He ceas'd; a guſt of grief began to riſe:
Faſt ſtreams a tide from beauteous Helen's eyes;
Faſt for the ſire the filial ſorrows flow;
The weeping monarch ſwells the mighty woe:

℣. 249. —— *A guſt of grief began to riſe,* etc.] It has been obſerved through the Iliad, and may be obſerved through the whole Odyſſey, that it was not a diſgrace to the greateſt heroes to ſhed tears; and indeed I cannot ſee why it ſhould be an honour to any man, to be able to diveſt himſelf of human nature ſo far as to appear inſenſible upon the moſt affecting occaſions. No man is born a ſtoic; it is art, not nature; tears are only a ſhame, when the cauſe from whence they flow is mean or vicious. Here Menelaus laments a friend, Telemachus a father, Piſiſtratus a brother: but from what cauſe ariſe the tears of Helen? It is to be remembered, that Helen is drawn in the ſofteſt colours in the Odyſſey; the character of the adultreſs is loſt in that of the penitent; the name of Ulyſſes throws her into tears, becauſe ſhe is the occaſion of all the ſufferings of that brave man; the poet makes her the firſt in ſorrow, as ſhe is the cauſe of all their tears.

Thy cheek, Piſiſtratus, the tears bedew,
While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view
Thy martial brother*: on the Phrygian plain
Extended pale, by ſwarthy Memnon ſlain!
But ſilence ſoon the ſon of Neſtor broke,
And melting with fraternal pity ſpoke.

Frequent, O King, was Neſtor wont to raiſe
And charm attention, with thy copious praiſe:
To crown thy various gifts, the ſage aſſign'd
The glory of a firm capacious mind:
With that ſuperior attribute controul
This unavailing impotence of ſoul.
Let not your roof with echoing grief reſound,
Now for the feaſt the friendly bowl is crown'd:

* Antilochus.

ỳ. 265. *Let not your roof with echoing grief reſound,*
Now for the feaſt the friendly bowl is crown'd.]
It may be aſked why ſorrow for the dead ſhould be more unſeaſonable in the evening than the morning? Euſtathius anſwers, leſt others ſhould look upon our evening tears as the effect of wine, and not of love to the dead.

Intempeſtivus venit inter pocula fletus.
Nec lacrymas dulci fas eſt miſcere falerno.

I fancy there may be a more rational account given of this expreſſion; the time of feaſting was ever looked upon as a time of joy and thankſgiving to the gods; it bore a religious veneration among the antients, and conſequently to ſhed tears when they ſhould expreſs their gratitude to the gods with joy, was eſteemed a prophanation.

But when from dewy shade emerging bright,
Aurora streaks the sky with orient light,
Let each deplore his dead: the rites of woe
Are all, alas! the living can bestow:
O'er the congenial dust injoin'd to shear
The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.
Then mingling in the mournful pomp with you,
I'll pay my brother's ghost a warrior's due,
And mourn the brave Antilochus, a name
Not unrecorded in the rolls of fame:
With strength and speed superior form'd, in fight
To face the foe, or intercept his flight:
Too early snatch'd by fate ere known to me!
I boast a witness of his worth in thee.

Young and mature! the monarch thus rejoins,
In thee renew'd the soul of Nestor shines:
Form'd by the care of that consummate sage,
In early bloom an oracle of age.
When-e'er his influence Jove vouchsafes to show'r
To bless the natal, and the nuptial hour;
From the great sire transmissive to the race,
The boon devolving gives distinguish'd grace.
Such, happy Nestor! was thy glorious doom;
Around thee full of years, thy offspring bloom,
Expert of arms, and prudent in debate;
The gifts of heaven to guard thy hoary state.
But now let each becalm his troubled breast,
Wash, and partake serene the friendly feast.

To move thy ſuit, Telemachus, delay,
'Till heav'n's revolving lamp reſtores the day.
He ſaid, Aſphalion ſwift the laver brings;
Alternate all partake the grateful ſprings;
Then from the rites of purity repair,
And with keen guſt the ſav'ry viands ſhare.
Mean-time with genial joy to warm the ſoul,
Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inſpiring bowl:

℣. 302. *Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inſpiring bowl*, etc.] The conjectures about this cordial of Helen have been almoſt infinite. Some take Nepenthes allegorically, to ſignify hiſtory, muſic, or philoſophy. Plutarch, in the firſt of the Sympoſiacs, affirms it to be, diſcourſe well ſuiting the preſent paſſions and conditions of the hearers. Macrobius is of the ſame opinion, *Delinimentum illud quod Helena vino miſcuit, non herba fuit, non ex India ſuccus, ſed narrandi opportunitas, quae hoſpitem moeroris oblitam flexit ad gaudium.* What gave a foundation to this fiction of Homer, as Dacier obſerves, might be this. Diodorus writes, that in Ægypt, and chiefly at Heliopolis, the ſame with Thebes where Menelaus ſojourned, as has been already obſerved, there lived women who boaſted of certain potions, which not only made the unfortunate forget all their calamities, but drove away the moſt violent ſallies of grief or anger. Euſebius directly affirms, that even in his time, the women of Dioſpolis were able to calm the rage of grief or anger by certain potions. Now, whether this be truth or fiction, it fully vindicates Homer, ſince a poet may make uſe of a prevailing, though falſe, opinion.

Milton mentions this Nepenthes in his excellent Maſque of Comus.

——— Behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his cryſtal bounds!

Temper'd with drugs of ſov'reign uſe, t' aſſuage
The boiling boſom of tumultuous rage;

Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of ſuch pow'r as this to ſtir up joy,
To life ſo friendly, or ſo cool to thirſt.

But that there may be ſomething more than fiction in this is very probable, ſince the Ægyptians were ſo notoriouſly ſkilled in phyſic; and particularly ſince this very Thon, or Thonis, or Thoon, is reported by the antients to have been the inventor of phyſic among the Ægyptians. The deſcription of this Nepenthes agrees admirably with what we know of the qualities and effects of opium.

It is further ſaid of Thon, that he was king of Canopus, and entertained Menelaus hoſpitably before he had ſeen Helen; but afterwards falling in love with her, and offering violence, he was ſlain by Menelaus. From his name the Ægyptians gave the name of Thoth to the firſt month of their year, and alſo to a city the name of Thonis. Ælian writes, that Menelaus, when he travelled to the Æthiopians, committed Helen to the protection of Thonis; that ſhe fell in love with him, that Polydamna growing jealous confined her to the iſland Pharos, but gave her an herb to preſerve her from the poiſon of ſerpents there frequent, which, from Helen, was called Helenium. Strabo writes, that at Canopus, on the mouth of Nile, there ſtands a city named Thonies, from king Thonis, who received Helen and Menelaus. Herodotus relates, that Thonis was governor of Canopus, that he repreſented the injury which Paris had done to Menelaus, to Proteus who reigned in Memphis. Euſtathius.

This laſt remark from Herodotus is ſufficient to ſhew, that Homer is not ſo fictitious as is generally imagined, that there really was a king named Proteus, that the

To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care,
And dry the tearful ſluices of deſpair:
Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted mind
All ſenſe of woe delivers to the wind.
Though on the blazing pile his parent lay,
Or a lov'd brother groan'd his life away,
Or darling ſon oppreſs'd by ruffian-force
Fell breathleſs at his feet, a mangled corſe,
From morn to eve, impaſſive and ſerene,
The man entranc'd would view the deathful ſcene.
Theſe drugs, ſo friendly to the joys of life,
Bright Helen learn'd from Thon's imperial wife;
Who ſway'd the ſceptre, where prolific Nile
With various ſimples clothes the fat'ned ſoil.
With wholeſome herbage mix'd, the direful bane
Of vegetable venom, taints the plain;
From Paeon ſprung, their patron-god imparts
To all the Pharian race his healing arts.
The beverage now prepar'd t' inſpire the feaſt,
The circle thus the beauteous Queen addreſt.
  Thron'd in omnipotence, ſupremeſt Jove
Tempers the fates of human race above;
By the firm ſanction of his ſov'reign will,
Alternate are decreed our good and ill.

poet builds his fables upon truth, and that it was truth that originally determined Homer to introduce Proteus into his poetry; but I intend to explain this more largely in the ſtory of Proteus.

To feaſtful mirth be this white hour aſſign'd,
And ſweet diſcourſe, the banquet of the mind.
My ſelf aſſiſting in the ſocial joy,
Will tell Ulyſſes' bold exploit in Troy:
Sole witneſs of the deed I now declare;
Speak you, (who ſaw) his wonders in the war.
  Seam'd o'er with wounds, which his own ſabre gave,
In the vile habit of a village ſlave,

ỳ. 331. *Myſelf———*
Will tell Ulyſſes' bold exploit—]
What is here related ſhews the neceſſity of the introduction of Helen, and the uſe the poet makes of it: ſhe is not brought in merely as a *muta perſona*, to fill up the number of perſons; but ſhe relates ſeveral incidents, in which ſhe herſelf was concerned, and which ſhe could only know; and conſequently not only diverſifies, but carries on the deſign of the ſtory. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 335. *Seam'd o'er with wounds*, etc.] The poet here ſhews his judgment in paſſing over many inſtances of the ſufferings of Ulyſſes, and relating this piece of conduct, not mentioned by any other author. The art of Ulyſſes in extricating himſelf from difficulties is laid down as the groundwork of the poem, he is πολύτροπος, and this is an excellent example of it. Thus further ſhews the neceſſity of the appearance of Helen, no other perſon being acquainted with the ſtory. If this ſtratagem be not a reality, yet it bears the reſemblance of it; and Magabyſus the Perſian (as Euſtathius obſerves) practiſed it, as we learn from hiſtory. We may reaſonably conjecture that Ulyſſes was committed to Helen, in hopes that he would diſcover the affairs of the army more freely to her than any other perſon: for what could be more agreeable to a Greek, than to be committed to the care of a Greek, as Ulyſſes was to Helen? By the ſame con-

The foe deceiv'd, he paſs'd the tented plain,
In Troy to mingle with the hoſtile train.
In this attire ſecure from ſearching eyes,
Till haply piercing through the dark diſguiſe
The chief I challeng'd; he, whoſe practis'd wit
Knew all the ſerpent-mazes of deceit,
Eludes my ſearch: but when his form I view'd,
Freſh from the bath with fragrant oils renew'd,
His limbs in military purple dreſs'd;
Each bright'ning grace the genuine Greek confeſs'd.
A previous pledge of ſacred faith obtain'd,
Till he the lines and Argive fleet regain'd,
To keep his ſtay conceal'd; the chief declar'd
The plans of war againſt the town prepar'd.

duct the poet raiſes the character of Helen, by making her ſhew her repentance by an act of generoſity to her countryman. The original ſays ſhe gave an oath to Ulyſſes not to diſcover him before he was in ſafety in the Grecian army: now this does not imply that ſhe ever diſcovered to the Trojans that Ulyſſes had entered Troy: the contrary opinion is moſt probable; for it cannot be imagined, but all Troy muſt have been incenſed greatly againſt her, had they known that ſhe had concealed one of their mortal enemies, and diſmiſſed him in ſafety: it was ſufficient for Ulyſſes to take her oath that ſhe would not diſcover him, till he was in ſecurity: he left her future conduct to her own diſcretion. It is probable that ſhe furniſhed Ulyſſes with a ſword, for in his return he ſlew many Trojans: he came to Troy, obſerves Euſtathius, in rags, and like a ſlave; and to have concealed a ſword, would have endangered his life

Exploring then the secrets of the state,
He learn'd what best might urge the Dardan fate:
And safe returning to the Grecian host,
Sent many a shade to Pluto's dreary coast.
Loud grief resounded through the tow'rs of Troy,
But my pleas'd bosom glow'd with secret joy:
For then with dire remorse, and conscious shame,
I view'd th' effects of that disastrous flame,

upon a discovery of it, and given strong suspicions of an impostor.

℣. 351. *Exploring then the secrets of the state.*] The words φρόνις is here used in a large sense: it takes in all the observations Ulysses made during his continuance in Troy, it takes in the designs and counsels of the enemy, his measuring the gates, the height of the walls, the easiest place for an assault or ambush, the taking away the Palladium, or whatever else a wise man may be supposed to observe, or act, in execution of such a stratagem. Eustathius.

℣. 357. *For then with dire remorse,* etc.] The conclusion of this speech is very artful: Helen ascribes her seduction to Venus, and mentions nothing of Paris. Instead of naming Troy, she conceals it, and only says she was carried thither, leaving Troy to the imagination of Menelaus; she suffers not herself to mention names so odious now to herself, and ever to Menelaus, as Paris and Troy. She complements Menelaus very handsomely, and says, that he wanted no accomplishment either in mind or body: it being the nature of man not to resent the injuries of a wife so much upon the account of her being corrupted, but of the preference she gives to another person; he looks upon such a preference as the most affecting part of the injury. Eustathius.

Which kindled by th' imperious queen of love,
Conſtrain'd me from my native realm to rove:
And oft in bitterneſs of ſoul deplor'd
My abſent daughter, and my dearer lord;
Admir'd among the firſt of human race,
For ev'ry gift of mind, and manly grace.

Right well, reply'd the King, your ſpeech diſplays
The matchleſs merit of the chief you praiſe:
Heroes in various climes myſelf have found,
For martial deeds, and depth of thought renown'd;
But Ithacus, unrival'd in his claim,
May boaſt a title to the loudeſt fame:
In battle calm he guides the rapid ſtorm,
Wiſe to reſolve, and patient to perform.
What wond'rous conduct in the chief appear'd,
When the vaſt fabric of the ſteed we rear'd!

℣. 365. *Menelaus's anſwer.*] The judgment of the poet in continuing the ſtory concerning Ulyſſes is not obſerved by any commentator. Ulyſſes is the chief hero of the poem, every thing ſhould have a reference to him, otherwiſe the narration ſtands ſtill without any advance towards the concluſion of it. The poet therefore to keep Ulyſſes in our minds, dwells upon his ſufferings and adventures: he ſupplies his not appearing in the preſent ſcene of action, by ſetting his character before us, and continually forcing his prudence, patience, and valour upon our obſervation. He uſes the ſame art and judgment with relation to Achilles in the Iliads: the hero of the poem is abſent from the chief ſcenes of action during much of the time which that poem compriſes, but he is continually brought into the mind of the reader, by recounting his exploits and glory.

Some daemon anxious for the Trojan doom,
Urg'd you with great Deiphobus to come,

℣. 375. *Some daemon anxious for the Trojan doom.*] It is the obſervation of Euſtathius, that theſe words are very artfully introduced to vindicate Helen; they imply that what ſhe acted was by compulſion, and to evidence this more clearly, Deiphobus is given her for an attendant as a ſpy upon her actions, that ſhe might not conceal any thing that ſhould happen, but act her part well, by endeavouring to deceive the Greeks in favour of Troy. It is the daemon, not Helen, that is in fault; this, continues Euſtathius, anſwers many objections that lie againſt Helen: for if ſhe was a real penitent, as ſhe herſelf affirms, how comes ſhe to endeavour to deceive the Greeks, by the diſguiſe of her voice, into more miſery than had yet ariſen from a ten years war? Or indeed is it credible that any perſon could modulate her voice ſo artfully as to reſemble ſo many voices? And how could the Greeks, incloſed in the wooden horſe, believe that their wives, who were in Greece, could be arrived in ſo ſhort a ſpace as they had been concealed there, from the various regions of Greece, and meet together in Troy? Would the wives of theſe heroes come into an enemy's country, when the whole army, except theſe latent heroes, were retired from it? this is ridiculous and impoſſible. I muſt confeſs there is great weight in theſe objections: but Euſtathius anſwers all by the interpoſition of the daemon; and by an idle tradition that Helen had the name of Echo, from the faculty of mimicking ſounds; and that this gift was beſtowed upon her by Venus when ſhe married Menelaus, that ſhe might be able to detect him, if he ſhould prove falſe to her bed, by imitating the voice of the ſuſpected perſon: (but Menelaus had more occaſion for this faculty than Helen.) As for the excuſe of the daemon, it equally excuſes all crimes: for inſtance, was Helen

T' explore the fraud; with guile oppos'd to guile,
Slow-pacing thrice around th' insidious pile;

false to Menelaus? the daemon occasioned it: does she act an imposture to destroy all her Grecian friends, and even Menelaus? the daemon compels her to it: the daemon compels her to go with Deiphobus, to surround the horse thrice, to sound the sides of it, to endeavour to surprize the latent Greeks by an imitation of the voices of their wives, and in short to act like a person that was very sincere in mischief.

Dacier takes another course, and gives up Helen, but remarks the great address of Menelaus. Helen had, said she, long desired nothing so much as to return to Lacedaemon; and her heart had long been wholly turned to Menelaus: Menelaus is not at all convinced of this pretended sincerity; but it would have been too gross, after he had taken her again to his bed, to convict her of falshood: he therefore contents himself barely to reply, that some daemon, an enemy to the Greeks, had forced her to a conduct disagreeable to her sincerity. This, continues Dacier, is an artful, but severe irony.

As for the objection concerning the impossibility of the Greeks believing their wives could be in Troy; she answers, that the authors of this objection have not sufficiently considered human nature. The voice of a beloved person might of a sudden, and by surprize, draw from any person a word involuntarily, before he has time to make reflection. This undoubtedly is true, where circumstances make an imposture probable; but here is an impossibility; it is utterly impossible to believe the wives of these heroes could be in Troy. Besides, Menelaus himself tells us, that even he had fallen into the snare, but Ulysses prevented it; this adds to the incredibility of the story: for if this faculty of mimicry was given upon his marriage with Helen, it was

Each noted leader's name you thrice invoke,
Your accent varying as their ſpouſes ſpoke:
The pleaſing ſounds each latent warrior warm'd,
But moſt Tydide's and my heart alarm'd:
To quit the ſteed we both impatient preſs,
Threat'ning to anſwer from the dark receſs.
Unmov'd the mind of Ithacus remain'd,
And the vain ardors of our love reſtrain'd:
But Anticlus unable to controul,
Spoke loud the language of his yerning ſoul:
Ulyſſes ſtrait with indignation fir'd,
(For ſo the common care of Greece requir'd)

nothing new to him, he muſt be ſuppoſed to be acquainted with it, and conſequently be the leſs liable to ſurprize: nay, it is not impoſſible, but the experiment might have been made upon him before Helen fled away with Paris.

In ſhort, I think this paſſage wants a further vindication; the circumſtances are low, if not incredible. Virgil, the great imitator of Homer, has given us a very different and more noble deſcription of the deſtruction of Troy: he has not thought fit to imitate him in this deſcription.

If we allow Helen to act by compulſion, to have feared the Trojans, and that Deiphobus was ſent as a ſpy upon her actions; yet this is no vindication of her conduct: ſhe ſtill acts a mean part, and, through fear, becomes an accomplice in endeavouring to betray and ruin the Greeks.

I ſhall juſt add, that after the death of Paris, Helen married Deiphobus; that the ſtory of the wooden horſe is probably founded upon the taking of Troy by an engine called a horſe, as the like engine was called a ram by the Romans.

Firm to his lips his forceful hands apply'd,
Till on his tongue the flutt'ring murmurs dy'd.
Mean-time Minerva from the fraudful horſe,
Back to the court of Priam bent your courſe.

Inclement fate! Telemachus replies,
Frail is the boaſted attribute of wiſe:
The leader, mingling with the vulgar hoſt,
Is in the common maſs of matter loſt!
But now let ſleep the painful waſte repair
Of ſad reflection, and corroding care.

He ceas'd; the menial fair that round her wait,
At Helen's beck prepare the room of ſtate:
Beneath an ample portico, they ſpread
The downy fleece to form the ſlumbrous bed;
And o'er ſoft palls of purple grain unfold
Rich tapeſtry, ſtiff with inwoven gold:
Then through th' illumin'd dome, to balmy reſt
Th' obſequious herald guides each princely gueſt:
While to his regal bow'r the king aſcends,
And beauteous Helen on her lord attends.

Soon as the morn, in orient purple dreſt,
Unbarr'd the portal of the roſeate eaſt,
The monarch roſe; magnificent to view,
Th' imperial mantle o'er his veſt he threw;
The glitt'ring zone athwart his ſhoulder caſt
A ſtarry fauchion low-depending grac'd,
Claſp'd on his feet th' embroider'd ſandals ſhine,
And forth he moves, majeſtic and divine:

Inſtant to young Telemachus he preſs'd,
And thus benevolent his ſpeech addreſs'd.
Say, royal youth, ſincere of ſoul report
What cauſe hath led you to the Spartan court?
Do public or domeſtic cares conſtrain
This toilſome voyage o'er the ſurgy main?
O highly favour'd delegate of Jove!
(Replies the prince) inflam'd with filial love,
And anxious hope, to hear my parent's doom,
A ſuppliant to your royal court I come.
Our ſovereign ſeat a lewd uſurping race
With lawleſs riot, and miſ-rule diſgrace;
To pamper'd inſolence devoted fall
Prime of the flock, and choiceſt of the ſtall:
For wild ambition wings their bold deſire,
And all to mount th' imperial bed aſpire.
But proſtate I implore, oh king! relate
The mournful ſeries of my father's fate:
Each known diſaſter of the man diſcloſe,
Born by his mother to a world of woes!
Recite them! nor in erring pity fear
To wound with ſtoried grief the filial ear:
If e'er Ulyſſes, to reclaim your right,
Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight,
If Phrygian camps the friendly toils atteſt,
To the ſire's merit give the ſon requeſt.
Deep from his inmoſt ſoul Atrides ſigh'd,
And thus indignant to the prince reply'd:

Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train
An absent heroe's nuptial joy profane!
So with her young, amid the woodland shades
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,

℣. 447. *Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train.*] Menelaus is fired with indignation at the injuries offered his friend by the suitors: he breaks out into an exclamation, and, in a just contempt, vouchsafes not to mention them: he thinks he fully distinguishes whom he intends, by calling them ἀνάλκιδες αὐτοί, *those cowards*. The comparison which he introduces is very just, they are the fawns, Ulysses is the lion.

This is the first simile that Homer has inserted in the Odyssey; but I cannot think it proceeded from a barrenness of invention, or through phlegm in the declension of his years, as some have imagined. The nature of the poem requires a difference of stile from the Iliad! The Iliad rushes along like a torrent; the Odyssey flows gently on like a deep stream, with a smooth tranquillity; Achilles is all fire, Ulysses all wisdom.

The simile in Homer is really beautiful; but in Hobbs ridiculous.

As when a stag and hind ent'ring the den
Of th' absent lion, lulls his whelps with tales
Of hills and dales; the lion comes agen,
And tears them into pieces with his nails.

Can any thing be more foreign to the sense of Homer, or worse translated? He construes κνημοὺς ἐξερέησι, by telling stories of hills and dales to the lions whelps, instead of *juga investigat*: but such mistakes are so frequent in Hobbs, that one would almost suspect his learning in Greek: he has disgraced the best poet, and a very great historian; Homer, and Thucydides.

Leaves in that fatal laire the tender fawns,
Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flow'ry lawns:
Mean-time return'd, with dire remorſeleſs ſway
The monarch-ſavage rends the trembling prey.
With equal fury, and with equal fame,
Ulyſſes ſoon ſhall re-aſſert his claim.
O Jove, ſupreme, whom gods and men revere!
And thou *, to whom 'tis giv'n to gild the ſphere!
With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial maid!
Such to our wiſh the warrior ſoon reſtore,
As when contending on the Leſbian ſhore
His proweſs Philomelides confeſs'd,
And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor bleſs'd:
Then ſoon th' invaders of his bed and throne,
Their love preſumptuous ſhall with life atone.
With patient ear, oh royal youth, attend
The ſtoried labours of thy father's friend:
Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
But truth ſevere ſhall dictate to my tongue:
Learn what I heard the ſea-born ſeer relate,
Whoſe eye can pierce the dark receſs of fate.

* Apollo.

ỳ. 462. *As when contending on the Lesbian ſhore.*] The poet here gives an account of one of Ulyſſes's adventures. Philomelides was king of Leſbos, and Euſtathius obſerves, that there was a tradition that Ulyſſes and Diomedes ſlew him, and turned a ſtately monument he had raiſed for himſelf into a public place for the reception of ſtrangers.

Long on th' Ægyptian coaſt by calms confin'd,
Heav'n to my fleet refus'd a proſp'rous wind:
No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim ſlain!
For this the gods each fav'ring gale reſtrain.
Jealous, to ſee their high beheſts obey'd,
Severe, if men th' eternal rights evade!
High o'er a gulphy ſea, the Pharian iſle
Fronts the deep roar of diſemboguing Nile:

℣. 479. —— *The Pharian iſle.*] This deſcription of Pharos has given great trouble to the critics and geographers; it is generally concluded, that the diſtance of Pharos is about ſeven ſtadia from Alexandria; Ammianus Marcellinus mentions this very paſſage thus; l. 22. *Inſula Pharos, ubi Protea cum Phocarum gregibus diverſatum Homerus fabulatur inflatius, a civitatis littore mille paſſibus diſparata*, or, *about a mile diſtant from the ſhores.* How then comes Homer to affirm it to be diſtant a full day's ſail? Dacier anſwers, that Homer might have heard that the Nile, continually bringing down much earthy ſubſtance, had enlarged the continent: and knowing it not to be ſo diſtant in his time, took the liberty of a poet, and deſcribed it as ſtill more diſtant in the days of Menelaus. But Dacier never ſees a miſtake in Homer. Had his poetry been worſe if he had deſcribed the real diſtance of Pharos? It is allowable in a poet to diſguiſe the truth, to adorn his ſtory; but what ornament has he given his poetry by this enlargement? Bochart has fully proved, that there is no acceſſion to the continent from any ſubſtance that the Nile brings down with it: the violent agitation of the ſeas prohibit it from lodging, and forming itſelf into ſolidity. Eratoſthenes is of opinion, that Homer was ignorant of the mouths of Nile: but Strabo anſwers, that his ſilence about them is not an argument of his ignorance, for nei-

Her diſtance from the ſhore, the courſe begun
At dawn, and ending with the ſetting ſun,
A gally meaſures; when the ſtiffer gales
Riſe on the poop, and fully ſtretch the ſails.
There anchor'd veſſels ſafe in harbour lye,
Whilſt limpid ſprings the failing caſk ſupply.

And now the twentieth ſun deſcending, laves
His glowing axle in the weſtern waves;
Still with expanded ſails we court in vain
Propitious winds, to waſt us o'er the main:

ther has he ever mentioned where he was born. But Strabo does not enter fully into the meaning of Eratoſthenes: Eratoſthenes does not mean that Homer was ignorant of the mouths of Nile from his ſilence, but becauſe he places Pharos at the diſtance of a whole day's ſail from the continent. The only way to unite this inconſiſtence is to ſuppoſe, that the poet intended to ſpecify the Peluſiac mouth of Nile, from which Pharos ſtands about a day's ſail: but this is ſubmitted to the critics.

I cannot tell whether one ſhould venture to make uſe of the word *Nile* in the tranſlation; it is doubtleſs an anachroniſm; that name being unknown in the times of Homer and Menelaus, when the Nile was called Ægyptus. Homer, in this very book,

------ Αἰγύπτοιο Διϊ πετέος ποταμοῖο.

Yet, on the other hand, this name of Ægyptus is ſo little known, that a common reader would ſcarce diſtinguiſh the river from the country; and indeed univerſal cuſtom has obtained for uſing the Latin name inſtead of the Grecian, in many other inſtances which are equally anachroniſms. Witneſs all the names of the gods and goddeſſes throughout Homer. Jupiter for Zeus, Juno for Ere, Neptune for Poſidaon, etc.

And the pale mariner at once deplores
His drooping vigour, and exhauſted ſtores.
When lo! a bright caerulean form appears,
The fair Eidothea! to diſpel my fears;
Proteus her ſire divine. With pity preſs'd,
Me ſole the daughter of the deep addreſs'd;
What-time, with hunger pin'd, my abſent mates
Roam the wild iſle in ſearch of rural cates,
Bait the barb'd ſteel, and from the fiſhy flood
Appeaſe th' afflictive fierce deſire of food.

ỷ. 499. *Bait the barb'd ſteel, and from the fiſhy flood.*] Menelaus ſays, hunger was ſo violent among his companions, that they were compelled to eat fiſh. Plutarch in his Sympoſiacs obſerves, that among the Ægyptians, Syrians, and Greeks, to abſtain from fiſh was eſteemed a piece of ſanctity; that though the Greeks were encamped upon the Helleſpont, there is not the leaſt intimation that they eat fiſh, or any ſea proviſion; and that the companions of Ulyſſes, in the 12th book of the Odyſſey, never ſought for fiſh till all their other proviſons were conſumed, and that the ſame neceſſity compelled them to eat the herds of the ſun which induced them to taſte fiſh. No fiſh is ever offered in ſacrifice: the Pythagoreans in particular command fiſh not to be eaten more ſtrictly than any other animal: fiſh afford no excuſe at all for their deſtruction, they live as it were in another world, diſturb not our air, conſume not our fruits, or injure the waters; and therefore the Pythagoreans, who were unwilling to offer violence to any animals, fed very little, or not at all on fiſhes. I thought it neceſſary to inſert this from Plutarch, becauſe it is an obſervation that explains other paſſages in the ſequel of the Odyſſey.

Whoe'er thou art, the azure goddeſs cries,
Thy conduct ill deſerves the praiſe of wiſe:
Is death thy choice, or miſery thy boaſt,
That here inglorious on a barren coaſt
Thy brave aſſociates droop, a meager train
With famine pale, and aſk thy care in vain?
Struck with the kind reproach, I ſtrait reply;
Whate'er thy title in thy native ſky,
A goddeſs ſure! for more than mortal grace
Speaks thee deſcendant of aetherial race:
Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains;
Some heav'nly pow'r averſe my ſtay conſtrains:
O, piteous of my fate, vouchſafe to ſhew,
(For what's ſequeſter'd from celeſtial view?)
What power becalms th' innavigable ſeas?
What guilt provokes him, and what vows appeaſe?
I ceas'd, when affable the goddeſs cry'd;
Obſerve, and in the truths I ſpeak confide:
Th' oraculous ſeer frequents the Pharian coaſt,
From whoſe high bed my birth divine I boaſt:
Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main,
The delegate of Neptune's watry reign.

ỳ. 521. *Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main.*] Euſtathius enumerates various opinions concerning Proteus; ſome underſtand Proteus allegorically to ſignify the firſt matter which undergoes all changes; others make him an emblem of true friendſhip, which ought not to be ſettled till it has been tried in all ſhapes: others make Proteus a picture of a flatterer, who takes up all ſhapes, and ſuits himſelf to all forms, in compliance to

Watch with insidious care his known abode;
There fast in chains constrain the various God:

the temper of the person whom he courts. The Greeks, observes Diodorus, imagined all these metamorphoses of Proteus to have been borrowed from the practices of the Ægyptian kings, who were accustomed to wear the figures of lions, bulls or dragons in their diadems, as emblems of royalty, and sometimes that of trees, etc. not so much for ornament as terror. Others took Proteus to be an enchanter; and Eustathius recounts several that were eminent in this art, as Cratisthenes the Phliasian, (which Dacier renders by mistake Callisthenes the Physician) who, when he pleased, could appear all on fire, and assume other appearances to the astonishment of the spectators: such also was Xenophon, Scymnus of Tarentum, Philippides of Syracuse, Heraclitus of Mitylene, and Nymphodorus, all practisers of magical arts; and Eustathius recites, that the Phocae were made use of in their incantations. Some write that Proteus was an Ægyptian tumbler, who could throw himself into variety of figures and postures; others, a stage-player; others that he was a great general, skilled in all the arts and stratagems of war: Dacier looks upon him to have been an enchanter, or θαυματοποιός. It is certain from Herodotus, that there was in the times of Menelaus a king named Proteus, who reigned in Memphis; that Ægypt was always remarkable for those who excelled in magical arts; thus Jannes and Jambres changed, at least in appearance, a rod into a serpent, and water into blood: it is not therefore improbable but that Menelaus hearing of him while he was in Ægypt, went to consult him as an enchanter, which kind of men always pretended to foreknow events: this perhaps was the real foundation of the whole story concerning Proteus; the rest is the fiction and embellishment of the poet, who ascribes to his Proteus whatever the credulity of men usually ascribes to enchanters.

Who bound, obedient to superior force,
Unerring will prescribe your destin'd course.
If studious of your realms, you then demand
Their state, since last you left your natal land;
Instant the God obsequious will disclose
Bright tracks of glory, or a cloud of woes.
She ceas'd, and suppliant thus I made reply;
O goddess! on thy aid my hopes rely:
Dictate propitious to my duteous ear,
What arts can captivate the changeful seer?
For perilous th' assay, unheard the toil,
T' elude the presence of a God by guile.
Thus to the goddess mild my suit I end.
Then she. Obedient to my rule, attend:
When through the zone of heav'n the mounted sun
Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run;
The seer, while zephyrs curl the swelling deep,
Basks on the breezy shore, in grateful sleep,
His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,
The Phocae swift surround his rocky cave,
Frequent and full; the consecrated train
Of her *, whose azure trident awes the main:
There wallowing warm, th' enormous herd exhales
On oily steam, and taints the noon-tide gales.
To that recess, commodious for surprize,
When purple light shall next suffuse the skies,
With me repair; and from thy warrior band
Three chosen chiefs of dauntless soul command:

* Amphitrite.

Let their auxiliar force befriend the toil,
For ſtrong the God, and perfected in guile.
Stretch'd on the ſhelly ſhore, he firſt ſurveys
The flouncing herd aſcending from the ſeas;
The number ſumm'd, repos'd in ſleep profound
The ſcaly charge their guardian God ſurround:
So with his batt'ring flocks the careful ſwain
Abides, pavilion'd on the graſſy plain.
With pow'rs united, obſtinately bold
Invade him, couch'd amid the ſcaly fold:
Inſtant he wears, eluſive of the rape,
The mimic force of every ſavage ſhape:
Or glides with liquid lapſe a murm'ring ſtream,
Or wrapt in flame, he glows at every limb.
Yet ſtill retentive, with redoubled might
Through each vain paſſive form conſtrain his flight.
But when, his native ſhape reſum'd, he ſtands
Patient of conqueſt, and your cauſe demands;
The cauſe that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
And ſoothe the vanquiſh'd with a victor's pray'r.
The bands relax'd, implore the ſeer to ſay
What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
Who ſtrait propitious, in prophetic ſtrain
Will teach you to repaſs th' unmeaſur'd main.

℣. 569. *But when, his native ſhape reſum'd,* etc.] This is founded upon the practice of enchanters, who never give their anſwers, till they have aſtoniſhed the imagination of thoſe who conſult them with their juggling deluſions. Dacier.

She ceas'd, and bounding from the ſhelfy ſhore,
Round the deſcending nymph the waves redounding roar.
  High rapt in wonder of the future deed,
With joy impetuous, to the port I ſpeed:
The wants of nature with repaſt ſuffice,
Till night with grateful ſhade involv'd the ſkies,
And ſhed ambroſial dews. Faſt by the deep,
Along the tented ſhore, in balmy ſleep,
Our cares were loſt. When o'er the eaſtern lawn,
In ſaffron robes the daughter of the dawn
Advanc'd her roſy ſteps; before the bay,
Due ritual honours to the gods I pay:
Then ſeek the place the ſea-born nymph aſſign'd,
With three aſſociates of undaunted mind.
Arriv'd, to form along th' appointed ſtrand
For each a bed, ſhe ſcoops the hilly ſand:
Then from her azure car, the finny ſpoils
Of four vaſt Phocae takes, to veil her wiles;
Beneath the finny ſpoils extended prone,
Hard toil! the prophet's piercing eye to ſhun;
New from the corſe, the ſcaly frauds diffuſe
Unſavoury ſtench of oil, and brackiſh ooze:
But the bright ſea-maid's gentle pow'r implor'd,
With nectar'd drops the ſick'ning ſenſe reſtor'd.
  Thus till the ſun had travell'd half the ſkies,
Ambuſh'd we lie, and wait the bold empriſe:
When thronging thick to baſk in open air,
The flocks of ocean to the ſtrand repair:

Couch'd on the ſunny ſand, the monſters ſleep :
Then Proteus mounting from the hoary deep,
Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit:
(In order told, we make the ſum complete.)
Pleas'd with the falſe review, ſecure he lies,
And leaden ſlumbers preſs his drooping eyes.
Ruſhing impetuous forth, we ſtrait prepare
A furious onſet with the ſound of war,
And ſhouting ſeize the God : our force t' evade
His various arts he ſoon reſumes in aid :
A Lion now, he curls a ſurgy mane ;
Sudden, our bands a ſpotted pard reſtrain ;
Then arm'd with tuſks, and light'ning in his eyes,
A boar's obſcener ſhape the god belies :

℣. 613. *And ſhouting ſeize the god.*——] Proteus has, through the whole ſtory, been deſcribed as a god who knew all things ; it may then be aſked, how comes it that he did not fore-know the violence that was deſigned againſt his own perſon ? and is it not a contradiction, that he who knew Menelaus without information, ſhould not know that he lay in ambuſh to ſeize him ? The only anſwer that occurs to me is, that theſe enchanters never pretend to have an inherent fore-knowlege of events, but learn things by magical arts, and by recourſe to the ſecrets of their profeſſion ; ſo that Proteus having no ſuſpicion, had not conſulted his art, and conſequently might be ſurpriſed by Menelaus: ſo far is agreeable to the pretenſions of ſuch deluders : the poet indeed has drawn him in colours ſtronger than life ; but poetry adds or detracts at pleaſure, and is allowed frequently to ſtep out of the way, to bring a foreign ornament into the ſtory.

On ſpiry volumes there a dragon rides;
Here, from our ſtrict embrace a ſtream he glides:
And laſt, ſublime his ſtately growth he rears,
A tree, and well-diſſembled foliage wears.
Vain efforts! with ſuperior pow'r compreſs'd,
Me with reluctance thus the ſeer addreſs'd.
Say, ſon of Atreus, ſay what God inſpir'd
This daring fraud, and what the boon deſir'd?

I thus; O thou, whoſe certain eye foreſees
The fix'd event of fate's remote decrees:
After long woes, and various toil endur'd,
Still on this deſert iſle my fleet is moor'd;
Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing! ſay
What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
What vows repentant will the pow'r appeaſe,
To ſpeed a proſp'rous voyage o'er the ſeas?

To Jove, (with ſtern regard the God replies,)
And all th' offended ſynod of the ſkies;
Juſt hecatombs with due devotion ſlain,
Thy guilt abſolv'd, a proſp'rous voyage gain.
To the firm ſanction of thy fate attend!
An exile thou, nor cheering face of friend,

ỳ. 635. *To Jove—juſt hecatombs—*, etc.] Homer continually inculcates morality, and piety to the Gods; he gives, in this place, a great inſtance of the neceſſity of it. Menelaus cannot ſucceed in any of his actions, till he pays due honours to the Gods: the neglect of ſacrifice is the occaſion of all his calamity, and the performance of it opens a way to all his future proſperity.

Nor ſight of natal ſhore, nor regal dome
Shalt yet enjoy, but ſtill art doom'd to roam.
Once more the Nile, who from the ſecret ſource
Of Jove's high ſeat deſcends with ſweepy force,
Muſt view his billows white beneath thy oar,
And altars blaze along his ſanguine ſhore.
Then will the Gods, with holy pomp ador'd,
To thy long vows a ſafe return accord.

He ceas'd: heart-wounded without afflictive pain,
(Doom'd to repeat the perils of the main,
A ſhelfy tract, and long!) O ſeer, I cry,
To the ſtern ſanction of th' offended ſky
My prompt obedience bows. But deign to ſay,
What fate propitious, or what dire diſmay

℣. 643. ——*Nile, who from the ſecret ſource*
Of Jove's high ſeat deſcends——]
Homer, it muſt be confeſſed, gives the epithet Διϊπετὴς generally to all rivers; if he had uſed it here peculiarly, there might have been room to have imagined, that he had been acquainted with the true cauſe of the inundatations of this famous river: the word Διϊπετὴς implies it: for it is now generally agreed, that theſe prodigious inundations proceed from the vaſt rains and the melting of the ſnows on the mountains of the moon in Æthiopia, about the autumnal Æquinox; when thoſe rains begin to fall, the river by degrees increaſes, and as they abate, it decreaſes; the word Διϊπετὴς is therefore peculiarly proper when applied to the Nile; for though all rivers depend upon the waters that fall from the air, or ἐκ Διὸς, yet the Nile more eſpecially; for when the rain ceaſes, the Nile conſiſts only of ſeven empty channels.

Sustain those peers, the reliques of our host,
Whom I with Nestor on the Phrygian coast
Embracing left? Must I the warriors weep,
Whelm'd in the bottom of the monstrous deep?
Or did the kind domestic friend deplore
The breathless heroes on their native shore?

Press not too far, reply'd the God; but cease
To know, what known will violate thy peace:
Too curious of their doom! with friendly woe
Thy breast will heave, and tears eternal flow.
Part live; the rest, a lamentable train!
Range the dark bounds of Pluto's dreary reign.
Two, foremost in the roll of Mars renown'd,
Whose arms with conquest in thy cause were crown'd,
Fell by disastrous fate; by tempests tost,
A third lives wretched on a distant coast.

By Neptune rescu'd from Minerva's hate,
On Gyrae, safe Oilean Ajax sate,
His ship o'erwhelm'd; but frowning on the floods,
Impious he roar'd defiance to the gods:
To his own prowess all the glory gave,
The power defrauding who vouchsaf'd to save.
This heard the raging ruler of the main;
His spear, indignant for such high disdain,
He launch'd; dividing with his forky mace
Th' aerial summit from the marble base:
The rock rush'd sea-ward, with impetuous roar
Ingulf'd, and to th' abyss the boaster bore.

ỷ. 682. — *And to th' abyss the boaster bore.*] It is in

By Juno's guardian aid, the wat'ry vaſt
Secure of ſtorms, your royal brother paſt:
Till coaſting nigh the cape, where Malea ſhrowds
Her ſpiry cliffs amid ſurrounding clouds;
A whirling guſt tumultuous from the ſhore,
Acroſs the deep his lab'ring veſſel bore.
In an ill-fated hour the coaſt he gain'd,
Where late in regal pomp Thyeſtes reign'd;
But when his hoary honours bow'd to fate,
Ægiſthus govern'd in paternal ſtate.
The ſurges now ſubſide, the tempeſt ends;
From his tall ſhip the king of men deſcends:
There fondly thinks the Gods conclude his toil!
Far from his own domain ſalutes the ſoil:

the original, *He died, having drunk the ſalt water.* This verſe has been omitted in many editions of Homer; and the antients, ſays Euſtathius, blame Ariſtarchus, for not marking it as a verſe that ought to be rejected; the ſimplicity of it conſiſts in the ſenſe, more than in the terms, and it is unworthy of Proteus to treat the death of Ajax with pleaſantry, as he ſeems to do, by adding *having drunk ſalt water:* but why may not Proteus be ſuppoſed to be ſerious, and the term Ἁλμυρὸν ὕδωρ, to imply no more than that he was drowned in the waves of the ocean? I know only one reaſon that can give any colour to the objection, viz. its being poſſibly become a vulgar expreſſion, and uſed commonly in a ludicrous ſenſe; then indeed it is to be avoided in poetry; but it does not follow, becauſe perhaps it might be uſed in this manner in the days of theſe critics, that therefore it was ſo uſed in the days of Homer. What was poetical in the time of the poet, might be grown vulgar in the time of the critics.

With rapture oſt the verge oft Greece reviews,
And the dear turf with tears of joy bedews.
Him thus exulting on the diſtant ſtrand,
A ſpy diſtinguiſh'd from his airy ſtand;
To bribe whoſe vigilance, Ægiſthus told
A mighty ſum of ill-perſuading gold:
There watch'd this guardian of his guilty fear,
Till the twelfth moon had wheel'd her pale career;
And now admoniſh'd by his eye, to court
With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
Of deathful arts expert, his lord employs
The miniſters of blood in dark ſurprize:
And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
Cloſe ambuſh'd nigh the ſpacious hall he plac'd.
Then bids prepare the hoſpitable treat:
Vain ſhews of love to vail his felon hate!
To grace the victor's welcome from the wars,
A train of courſers, and triumphal cars
Magnificent he leads: the royal gueſt
Thoughtleſs of ill, accepts the fraudful feaſt.
The troop forth iſſuing from the dark receſs,
With homicidal rage the king oppreſs!
So, whilſt he feeds luxurious in the ſtall,
The ſov'reign of the herd is doom'd to fall.

℣. 719. *So, whilſt he feeds luxurious in the ſtall,* etc.] Dacier tranſlates βοῦν, by *taureau* a bull; and miſunderſtands Euſtathius who directly ſays, that in the ſecond Iliad the poet compares Agamemnon to a bull, in this place to an ox, ταύρῳ εἴκασεν νῦν δὲ βοῒ αὐτὸν ὡμοίωσεν.

The partners of his ſame and toils at Troy,
Around their lord, a mighty ruin! lie:
Mix'd with the brave, the baſe invaders bleed;
Ægiſthus ſole ſurvives to boaſt the deed.
He ſaid; chill horrors ſhook my ſhiv'ring ſoul,
Rack'd with convulſive pangs in duſt I roul;
And hate, in madneſs of extreme deſpair,
To view the ſun, or breath the vital air.
But when ſuperior to the rage of woe,
I ſtood reſtor'd, and tears had ceas'd to flow;
Lenient of grief, the pitying God began——
Forget the brother, and reſume the man:
To fate's ſupreme diſpoſe the dead reſign,
That care be fate's, a ſpeedy paſſage thine.
Still lives the wretch who wrought the death deplor'd,
But lives a victim for thy vengeful ſword;
Unleſs with filial rage Oreſtes glow,
And ſwift prevent the meditated blow;
You timely will return a welcome gueſt,
With him to ſhare the ſad funereal feaſt.
He ſaid: new thoughts my beating heart employ,
My gloomy ſoul receives a gleam of joy.
Fair hope revives; and eager I addreſt
The preſcient godhead to reveal the reſt.

The one is undoubtedly deſigned to deſcribe the courage and majeſtic port of a warrior, the other to give us an image of a prince falling in full peace and plenty, ὥς βοῦν ἐπὶ φάτνῃ.

The doom decreed of these disastrous two
I've heard with pain, but oh! the tale pursue;
What third brave son of Mars the fates constrain
To roam the howling desart of the main:
Or in eternal shade if cold he lies,
Provoke new sorrow from these grateful eyes.

ỿ. 749. *Or in eternal shade if cold he lyes.*] Proteus in the beginning of his relation had said, that *one person was alive, and remained enclosed by the ocean:* how then comes Menelaus here to say, give me an account of that other person who is alive, or dead? Perhaps the sorrow which Menelaus conceived for his friend Ulysses, might make him fear the worst; and Proteus adding, *enclosed by the ocean*, might give a suspicion that he was dead, the words being capable of ambiguity. However this be, it sets the friendship of Menelaus in a strong light: where friendship is sincere, a state of uncertainty is a state of fears, we dread even possibilities, and give them an imaginary certainty. Upon this, one of the finest compliments that a poet ever made to a patron turns, that of Horace to Mecaenas, in the first of the Epodes.

It may not be perhaps disagreeable to the reader to observe, that Virgil has borrowed this story of Proteus from Homer, and translated it almost literally. Rapine says, that Homer's description is more ingenious and fuller of invention, but Virgil's more judicious. I wish that critic had given his reasons for his opinion. I believe in general, the plan of the Iliad and Odyssey is allowed, by the best of critics, to be more perfect than that of the Æneis. Homer, with respect to the unity of time, has the advantage very manifestly; Rapine confesses it, and Aristotle proposes him as an example to all epic authors. Where then is the superiority of judgment? Is it that there are more fabulous, I mean

That chief, rejoin'd the God, his race derives
From Ithaca, and wond'rous woes ſurvives;
Laertes's ſon: girt with circumfluous tides,
He ſtill calamitous conſtraint abides.

incredible, ſtories in Homer than Virgil? as that of the Cyclops, the ſhips of Alcinous, etc. Virgil has imitated moſt of theſe bold fables, and the ſtory of the ſhips of Alcinous is not more incredible than the transformation of the ſhips of Æneas. But this is too large a ſubject to be diſcuſſed in the compaſs of theſe annotations. In particular paſſages I freely allow the preference to Virgil, as in the deſcent of Æneas into hell, etc. but in this ſtory of Proteus, I cannot ſee any ſuperiority of judgment. Virgil is little more than a tranſlator; to ſhew the particulars would be too tedious: I refer it to the reader to compare the two authors, and ſhall only inſtance in one paſſage.

Ἡμεῖς δ' ἀψ' ἰάχοντες ἐπεσσύμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ χεῖρας,
Βάλλομεν. ἠδ' ὁ γέρων δολίης ἐπελήθετο τέχνης,
Ἀλλ' ἤτοι πρώτιστα λέων γένετ' ἠϋγένειος
Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων, καὶ πάρδαλις ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς,
Γίνετο δ' ὑγρὸν ὕδωρ, καὶ δένδρεον ὑψιπέτηλον, etc.

Cum clamore ruit magno, maniciſque jacentem
Occupat: ille ſuae contra non immemor artis,
Omnia transformat ſeſe in miracula rerum,
Ignemque, horribilemque feram, fluviumque liquentem, etc.

Homer has a manifeſt advantage in the occaſion of the ſtory: the loſs of a few bees ſeems to be a cauſe too trivial for an undertaking ſo great as the ſurprize of a deity; whereas the whole happineſs of Menelaus depends upon this conſultation of Proteus: this is a far more important cauſe, and conſequently in this reſpect ſomething more is due to Homer than the ſole honour of an inventor.

Him in Calypso's cave of late I view'd,
When streaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
But vain his pray'r, his arts are vain to move
Th' enamour'd goddess, or elude her love:
His vessel sunk, and dear companions lost,
He lives reluctant on a foreign coast.
But oh belov'd by heav'n! reserv'd to thee
A happier lot the smiling fates decree:
Free from that law, beneath whose mortal sway
Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay;
Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plains
Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.

℣. 765. *Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plain*
Of utmost earth, etc.]

This is the only place in which the Elysian field is mentioned in Homer. The conjectures of the ancients are very various about it: Plato, in his Phaed. places it in *coelo stellato*, or the region of the stars; but since Homer fixes it, εἰς πείρατα γαίης, or, as Milton expresses it, at the *earth's green end*, I will pass over the conjectures of others, especially since the μακάρων Νῆσοι, by which others express Elysium, confines it to this world.

Strabo, says Eustathius, places it not far from Maurusia, that lies near the Streights: it is supposed by Bochart, as Dacier observes, that the fable is of Phoenician extraction, that *Alizuth*, in Hebrew, signifies *joy* or *exultation*; which word the Greeks, adapting to their way of pronunciation, called *Elysius*. If this be true, I should come into an opinion that has much prevailed, that the Greeks had heard of Paradise from the Hebrews; and that the Hebrews describing Paradise as a place of *Alizuth*, or *joy*, gave occasion to all the fables of the Grecian Elysium.

Joys ever-young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year:
Stern winter ſmiles on that auſpicious clime:
The fields are florid with unfading prime:
From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mold the round hail, or flake the fleecy ſnow;
But from the breezy deep, the bleſt inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the weſtern gale.
This grace peculiar will the Gods afford
To thee the ſon of Jove, and beauteous Helen's lord.
He ceas'd, and plunging in the vaſt profound,
Beneath the God the whirling billows bound.
Then ſpeeding back, involv'd in various thought,
My friends attending at the ſhore I ſought.
Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we controll,
Till light with ſilent ſhade inveſts the pole;
Then loſe the cares of life in pleaſing reſt.—
Soon as the morn reveals the roſeate eaſt,
With ſails we wing the maſts, our anchors weigh,
Unmoor the fleet, and ruſh into the ſea.
Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
Then ſteering backward from the Pharian iſle,
We gain the ſtream of Jove-deſcended Nile:
There quit the ſhips, and on the deſtin'd ſhore
With ritual hecatombs the Gods adore:
Their wrath aton'd, to Agamemnon's name
A cenotaph I raiſe of deathleſs fame.

These rites to piety and grief discharg'd :
The friendly Gods a springing gale inlarg'd :
The fleet swift tilting o'er the surges flew,
Till Grecian cliffs appear'd a blissful view !

Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
A story, fruitful of disastrous fate :
And now, young prince, indulge my fond request;
Be Sparta honour'd with his royal guest,
Till from his eastern goal, the joyous sun
His twelfth diurnal race begins to run.
Mean-time my train the friendly gifts prepare,
Three sprightly coursers, and a polish'd car :
With these a goblet of capacious mold,
Figur'd with art to dignify the gold,
(Form'd for libation to the Gods,) shall prove
A pledge and monument of sacred love.

My quick return, young Ithacus rejoin'd,
Damps the warm wishes of my raptur'd mind :
Did not my fate my needful haste constrain,
Charm'd by your speech, so graceful and humane,
Lost in delight the circling year would roll,
While deep attention fix'd my list'ning soul.
But now to Pyle permit my destin'd way,
My lov'd associates chide my long delay.

ỳ. 806. *Three sprightly coursers.*] How comes it to pass that Menelaus proffers three horses to Telemachus? This was a complete set among the ancients, they used one pole-horse and two leaders. Eustathius.

In dear remembrance of your royal grace,
I take the preſent of the promis'd vaſe;
The courſers for the champian ſports, retain;
That gift our barren rocks will render vain:

ỽ. 822. *That gift our barren rocks will render vain.*] This paſſage where Telemachus refuſes the horſes has been much obſerved and turned to a moral ſenſe, viz. as a leſſon to men to deſire nothing but what is ſuitable to their conditions. Horace has introduced it into his epiſtles.

Haud male Telemachus proles patientis Ulyſſei
Non eſt aptus equis Ithacae locus, ut neque planis
Porrectus ſpaciis, nec multae prodigus herbae:
Atride, magis apta tibi tua dona relinquam.

This is the reaſon why Ulyſſes, as Euſtathius obſerves upon the tenth of the Iliads, leaves the horſes of Rheſus to the diſpoſal of Diomedes; ſo that the ſame ſpirit of wiſdom reigned in Telemachus, that was ſo remarkable in Ulyſſes. This is the reaſon why Menelaus ſmiled; it was not at the frankneſs or ſimplicity of Telemachus, but it was a ſmile of joy, to ſee the young prince inherit his father's wiſdom.

It is the remark of Euſtathius, that Telemachus is far from exalting the nature of his country; he confeſſes it to be barren, and more barren than the neighbouring iſlands; yet that natural and laudable affection which all worthy perſons have for their country makes him prefer it to places of a more happy ſituation. This appears to me a replication to what Menelaus had before offered concerning the tranſplantation of Ulyſſes to Sparta; this is contained in ἱπποβότοιο; and then the meaning is, it is true, Ithaca is a barren region, yet more deſirable than this country of Lacedaemon, this ἱππόβοτος γαῖα. It is the more probable from the offer of horſes which

Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browze,
But neither mead nor plain ſupplies, to feed
The ſprightly courſer, or indulge his ſpeed:
To ſea-ſurrounded realms the Gods aſſign
Small tract of fertile lawn, the leaſt to mine.

His hand the king with tender paſſion preſs'd,
And ſmiling thus, the royal youth addreſs'd:
O early worth! a ſoul ſo wiſe, and young,
Proclaims you from the ſage Ulyſſes ſprung.
Selected from my ſtores, of matchleſs price
An urn ſhall recompence your prudent choice:
Not mean the maſſy mold, of ſilver grac'd
By Vulcan's art, the verge with gold enchas'd:

Menelaus had then made, and is alſo another reaſon for the ſmile of Menelaus.

Euſtathius remarks that Menelaus, though he has expreſſed the greateſt friendſhip for Ulyſſes, yet makes no offer to reſtore the fortunes of his friend by any military aſſiſtance; though he had a moſt fair opportunity given him to repay the paſt kindneſs of Ulyſſes to his wife Penelope, and his ſon Telemachus; and how comes Telemachus not to aſk it either of Neſtor or Menelaus? He anſwers, that this depended upon the uncertainty they were yet under, concerning the life of Ulyſſes. But the truer reaſon in my opinion is, that the nature of epic poetry requires a contrary conduct: the hero of the poem is to be the chief agent, and the re-eſtabiſhment of his fortunes muſt be owing to his own wiſdom and valour. I have enlarged upon this already, ſo that there is no occaſion in this place to inſiſt upon it.

A pledge the ſceptred pow'r of Sidon gave.
When to his realm I plow'd the orient wave.
Thus they alternate; while with artful care
The menial train the regal feaſt prepare:
The firſtlings of the flock are doom'd to dye;
Rich fragrant wines the chearing bowl ſupply;
A female band the gift of Ceres bring;
And the gilt roofs with genial triumph ring.
Mean-while, in Ithaca, the Suitor-pow'rs
In active games divide their jovial hours:
In Areas vary'd with moſaic art,
Some whirl the diſk, and ſome the jav'lin dart.
Aſide, ſequeſter'd from the vaſt reſort,
Antinous ſate ſpectator of the ſport;
With great Eurymachus, of worth confeſt,
And high deſcent, ſuperior to the reſt;
Whom young Noemon lowly thus addreſt.
My ſhip equipp'd within the neighb'ring port,
The prince, departing from the Pylian court,
Requeſted for his ſpeed; but, courteous, ſay
When ſteers he home, or why this long delay?
For Elis I ſhould ſail with utmoſt ſpeed,
T'import twelve mares which there luxurious feed,
And twelve young mules, a ſtrong laborious race,
New to the plow, unpractis'd in the trace.
Unknowing of the courſe to Pyle deſign'd,
A ſudden horror ſeiz'd on either mind:
The prince in rural bow'r they fondly thought,
Numb'ring his flocks and herds, not far remote.

Relate, Antinous cries, devoid of guile,
When ſpread the prince his ſail for diſtant Pyle?
Did choſen chiefs acroſs the gulphy main
Attend his voyage or domeſtic train?
Spontaneous did you ſpeed his ſecret courſe,
Or was the veſſel ſeiz'd by fraud or force?
With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
(Noemon cry'd) the veſſel was reſign'd.
Who in the balance with the great affairs
Of courts, preſume to weigh their private cares?
With him the peerage next in pow'r to you:
And Mentor, captain of the lordly crew,
Or ſome celeſtial in his rev'rend form,
Safe from the ſecret rock and adverſe ſtorm,
Pilots the courſe: for when the glimm'ring ray
Of yeſter dawn diſclos'd the tender day,
Mentor himſelf I ſaw, and much admir'd.——
Then ceas'd the youth, and from the court retir'd.
Confounded and appall'd, th' unfiniſh'd game
The ſuitors quit, and all to council came:
Antinous firſt th' aſſembled peers addreſt,
Rage ſparkling in his eyes, and burning in his breaſt.
O ſhame to manhood! ſhall one daring boy
The ſcheme of all our happineſs deſtroy?
Fly unperceiv'd, ſeducing half the flow'r
Of nobles, and invite a foreign pow'r?
The pond'rous engine rais'd to cruſh us all,
Recoiling, on his head is ſure to fall.

Inſtant prepare me, on the neighb'ring ſtrand,
With twenty choſen mates a veſſel mann'd;
For ambuſh'd cloſe beneath the Samian ſhore
His ſhip returning ſhall my ſpies explore:
He ſoon his raſhneſs ſhall with life atone,
Seek for his father's fate, but find his own.

With vaſt applauſe the ſentence all approve;
Then riſe, and to the feaſtful hall remove:
Swift to the queen the herald Medon ran,
Who heard the conſult of the dire Divan:
Before her dome the royal matron ſtands,
And thus the meſſage of his haſte demands.

℣. 896. *For ambuſh'd cloſe*, etc.] We have here another uſe which the poet makes of the voyage of Telemachus. Euſtathius remarks, that theſe incidents not only diverſify but enliven the poem. But it may be aſked why the poet makes not uſe of ſo fair an opportunity to inſert a gallant action of Telemachus, and draw him not as eluding, but defeating his adverſaries? The anſwer is eaſy; that the ſuitors ſailed completely armed, and Telemachus unprovided of any weapons: and therefore Homer conſults credibility, and forbears to paint his young hero in the colours of a knight in romance, who upon all diſadvantages engages and defeats his oppoſers. But then to what purpoſe is this ambuſh of the ſuitors, and what part of the deſign of the poem is carried on by it? The very chief aim of it; to ſhew the ſufferings of Ulyſſes: he is unfortunate in all relations of life, as a king, as an huſband, and here very eminently as a father; theſe ſufferings are laid down in the propoſition of the Odyſſey as eſſential to the poem, and conſequently this ambuſh laid by the ſuitors againſt the life of Telemachus is an eſſential ornament.

What will the ſuitors! muſt my ſervant train
Th' alloted labours of the day refrain,
For them to form ſome exquiſite repaſt?
Heaven grant this feſtival may prove their laſt!
Or if they ſtill muſt live, from me remove
The double plague of luxury and love!

ỽ. 906. *The ſpeech of Penelope.*] Longinus in particular commends this ſpeech as a true picture of a perſon that feels various emotions of ſoul, and is born by every guſt of paſſion from ſentiment to ſentiment, with ſudden and unexpected tranſitions. There is ſome obſcurity in the Greek, this ariſes from the warmth with which he ſpeaks, ſhe has not leiſure to explain herſelf fully, a circumſtance natural to a perſon in anger.

Penelope gives a very beautiful picture of Ulyſſes: 'The beſt of princes are allowed to have their favorites, 'and give a greater ſhare of affection than ordinary to 'particular perſons. But Ulyſſes was a father to all 'his people alike, and loved them all as his children; 'a father, though he bears a more tender affection to 'one child than to another, yet ſhews them all an equal 'treatment; thus alſo a good king is not ſwayed by in'clination, but juſtice, towards all his ſubjects.' Dac.

One circumſtance is very remarkable, and gives us a full view of a perſon in anger; at the very ſight of Medon, Penelope flies out into paſſion, ſhe gives him not time to ſpeak one ſyllable, but ſpeaks herſelf as if all the ſuitors were preſent, and reproaches them in the perſon of Medon, though Medon is juſt to her and Ulyſſes; but anger is an undiſtinguiſhing paſſion. What ſhe ſays of ingratitude, recalls to my memory what is to be found in Laertius: Ariſtotle being aſked what thing upon earth ſooneſt grew old? replied, *an obligation.* Τί τάχιστα γηράσκει; *reſpondit*, χάρις.

Forbear, ye ſons of inſolence! forbear,
In riot to conſume a wretched heir.
In the young ſoul illuſtrious thought to raiſe,
Were ye not tutor'd with Ulyſſes' praiſe?
Have not your fathers oft my lord defin'd,
Gentle of ſpeech, beneficent of mind?
Some kings with arbitrary rage devour,
Or in their tyrant-minions veſt the pow'r:
Ulyſſes let no partial favours fall,
The people's parent, he protected all:
But abſent now, perfidious and ingrate!
His ſtores ye ravage, and uſurp his ſtate.

He thus; O were the woes you ſpeak the worſt!
They form a deed more odious and accurſt;
More dreadful than your boding ſoul divines:
But pitying Jove avert the dire deſigns!
The darling object of your royal care
Is mark'd to periſh in a deathful ſnare:
Before he anchors in his native port,
From Pyle re-ſailing and the Spartan court,
Horrid to ſpeak! in ambuſh is decreed
The hope and heir of Ithaca to bleed!

Sudden ſhe ſunk beneath the weighty woes,
The vital ſtreams a chilling horror froze:
The big round tear ſtands trembling in her eye,
And on her tongue imperfect accents dye.
At length, in tender language, interwove
With ſighs, ſhe thus expreſs'd her anxious love.

Why raſhly would my ſon his fate explore,
Ride the wild waves, and quit the ſafer ſhore?
Did he, with all the greatly wretched, crave
A blank oblivion, and untimely grave!
'Tis not, reply'd the ſage, to Medon giv'n
To know, if ſome inhabitant of heav'n,
In his young breaſt the daring thought inſpir'd;
Or if alone with filial duty fir'd,
The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
Studious to learn his abſent father's doom.
The ſage retir'd: unable to controul
The mighty griefs that ſwell her lab'ring ſoul,
Rolling convulſive on the floor, is ſeen
The piteous object of a proſtrate queen.
Words to her dumb complaint a pauſe ſupplies,
And breath, to waſte in unavailing cries.
Around their ſov'reign wept the menial fair,
To whom ſhe thus addreſs'd her deep deſpair.

ỳ. 941. *Ride the wild waves*——] Were this paſſage to be rendered literally, it would run thus, *climb the ſwift ſhips, which are horſes to men in the ſeas.* Euſtathius obſerves the alluſion is very juſt, and that the only doubt is, whether it be brought in opportunely by Penelope? It may be doubted, if the mind could find leiſure to introduce ſuch alluſions. Dacier anſwers, that Penelope ſpeaks thus through indignation: the grief that ſhe conceives at the hardineſs of men, in finding out a way to paſs the ſeas as well as land, furniſhed her with theſe figures very naturally, for figures are agreeable to paſſion.

Behold a wretch whom all the Gods consign
To woe! Did ever sorrows equal mine?
Long to my joys my dearest lord is lost,
His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast:
Now from my fond embrace by tempests torn,
Our other column of the state is born:
Nor took a kind adieu, nor sought consent!—
Unkind confed'rates in his dire intent!
Ill suits it with your shews of duteous zeal,
From me the purpos'd voyage to conceal:
Though at the solemn midnight hour he rose,
Why did you fear to trouble my repose?
He either had obey'd my fond desire,
Or seen his mother pierc'd with grief expire.
Bid Dolius quick attend, the faithful slave,
Whom to my nuptial train Icarius gave,
To tend the fruit-groves: with incessant speed
He shall this violence of death decreed,
To good Laertes tell. Experienc'd age
May timely intercept the ruffian rage,
Convene the tribes, the murd'rous plot reveal,
And to their pow'r to save his race appeal.

Then Euryclea thus. My dearest dread!
Though to the sword I bow this hoary head,
Or if a dungeon be the pain decreed,
I own me conscious of th' unpleasing deed:
Auxiliar to his flight, my aid implor'd,
With wine and viands I the vessel stor'd:

A ſolemn oath impos'd the ſecret ſeal'd,
'Till the twelfth dawn the light of heav'n reveal'd.
Dreading th' effect of a fond mother's fear,
He dar'd not violate your royal ear.
But bathe, and in imperial robes array'd,
Pay due devotions to the martial * maid,
And reſt affianc'd in her guardian aid.
Send not to good Laertes, nor engage
In toils of ſtate the miſeries of age:
'Tis impious to ſurmize, the pow'rs divine
To ruin doom the Jove-deſcended line:
Long ſhall the race of juſt Arceſius reign,
And iſles remote enlarge his old domain.

* Minerva.

℣. 998. *And iſles remote enlarge his old domain.*] Dacier offers a criticiſm upon theſe laſt words of Euryclea: it cannot be imagined theſe fertile fields can be ſpoken of Ithaca; Plutarch's deſcription of it is intirely contradictory to this: 'Ithaca, ſays he, is rough and mountainous, fit only to breed goats; upon cultivation it ſcarce yields any fruits, and theſe ſo worthleſs, as ſcarce to recompenſe the labour of gathering.' Homer therefore by this expreſſion intended the other dominions of Ulyſſes, ſuch as Cephalenia, etc.

But I queſtion not that the whole dominions of Ulyſſes are included, Ithaca as well as Cephalenia; for tho' Ithaca was mountainous, yet the vallies were fruitful, according to the deſcription of it in the 13th of the Odyſſey.

The rugged ſoil allows no level ſpace
For flying chariots, or the rapid race;

The queen her ſpeech with calm attention hears,
Her eyes reſtrain the ſilver-ſtreaming tears:
She bathes, and rob'd, the ſacred dome aſcends;
Her pious ſpeed a female train attends:
The ſalted cakes in caniſters are laid,
And thus the queen invokes Minerva's aid.
Daughter divine of Jove, whoſe arm can wield
Th' avenging bolt, and ſhake the dreadful ſhield!
If e'er Ulyſſes to thy fane prefer'd
The beſt and choiceſt of his flock and herd;
Hear, goddeſs, hear, by thoſe oblations won;
And for the pious ſire preſerve the ſon:
His wiſh'd return with happy pow'r befriend,
And on the ſuitors let thy wrath deſcend.
She ceas'd; ſhrill ecſtaſies of joy declare
The fav'ring goddeſs preſent to the pray'r:
The ſuitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
A ſignal of her hymenaeal choice:

Yet not ungrateful to the peaſant's pain,
Suffices fulneſs to the ſwelling grain;
The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
And cluſtring grapes afford a gen'rous juice, etc.

As for her remark upon ἀπόπροθὶ, it is of no validity; the word ſtands in oppoſition to Δώματα, and implies no more than *here*, or at a diſtance in general.

ỳ. 1015. *The ſuitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice,*
A ſignal of her hymenaeal choice.]
It may be aſked whence this conjecture of the ſuitors ariſes? Penelope is deſcribed as weeping grievouſly, and fainting away, and yet immediately the ſuitors con-

Whilſt one moſt jovial thus accoſts the board;
'Too late the queen ſelects a ſecond lord:
'In evil hour the nuptial rite intends,
'When o'er her ſon diſaſtrous death impends.'
Thus he, unſkill'd of what the fates provide!
But with ſevere rebuke Antinous cry'd.

These empty vaunts will make the voyage vain;
Alarm not with diſcourſe the menial train:

clude ſhe is preparing for the nuptials. Euſtathius anſwers, that undoubtedly the ſuitors underſtood the queen had purified herſelf with water, and ſupplicated the goddeſs Minerva, though the poet omits the relation of ſuch little particularities. But whence is it that the poet gives a greater ſhare of wiſdom to Euryclea than to Penelope? Penelope commands a ſervant to fly with the news of the abſence of Telemachus to Laertes, which could not at all advantage Telemachus, and only grieve Laertes: Euryclea immediately diverts her from that vain intention, adviſes her to have recourſe to heaven, and not add miſery to the already miſerable Laertes: this is wiſdom in Euryclea. But it muſt be confeſſed, that the other is nature in Penelope: Euryclea is calm, Penelope in a paſſion: and Homer would have been a very bad painter of human nature, if he had drawn Penelope thus heated with paſſion in the mild temper of Euryclea; grief and reſentment give Penelope no time to deliberate, whereas Euryclea is leſs concerned, and conſequently capable of thinking with more tranquillity.

ỳ. 1022. *With rebuke ſevere Antinous cry'd.*] Antinous ſpeaks thus in return to what had been before ſaid by one of the ſuitors concerning Telemachus, viz. 'the 'queen little imagines that her ſon's death approaches;' he fears leſt Penelope ſhould know their intentions, and hinder their meaſures by raiſing the ſubjects of Ithaca that ſtill retain'd their fidelity. Dacier.

The great event with ſilent hope attend;
Our deeds alone our council muſt commend.

His ſpeech thus ended ſhort, he frowning roſe,
And twenty chiefs renown'd for valour choſe:
Down to the ſtrand he ſpeeds with haughty ſtrides,
Where anchor'd in the bay the veſſel rides;
Replete with mail, and military ſtore,
In all her tackle trim to quit the ſhore.
The deſp'rate crew aſcend, unfurl the ſails;
(The ſea-ward prow invites the tardy gales)
Then take repaſt, till Heſperus diſplay'd
His golden circlet in the weſtern ſhade.

Mean-time the queen without refection due,
Heart-wounded, to the bed of ſtate withdrew:
In her ſad breaſt the prince's fortunes roul,
And hope and doubt alternate ſeize her ſoul.
So when the wood-man's toil her cave ſurrounds
And with the hunter's cry the grove reſounds;

ỳ. 1041. *So when the wood-man's toil,* etc.] The poet, to ſhew the majeſty and high ſpirit of Penelope, compares her to a lioneſs: he manages the alluſion very artfully: he deſcribes the lioneſs not as exerting any dreadful acts of violence, (for ſuch a compariſon is only proper to be applied to a hero) but incloſed by her enemies; which at once ſhews both her danger and nobleneſs of ſpirit under it: it is in the Greek δόλιον κύκλον, which may ſignify either a circle of toils or nets, or a circle of enemies: the former is perhaps preferable, as correſponding beſt with the condition of Penelope, who was ſurrounded with the ſecret ambuſhes and ſnares of the ſuitors. Euſtathius.

With grief and rage the mother-lion stung,
Fearless herself, yet trembles for her young.
  While pensive in the silent slumb'rous shade,
Sleep's gentle pow'rs her drooping eyes invade;
Minerva, life-like on imbody'd air,
Impress'd the form of Iphthima the fair:
(Icarius' daughter she, whose blooming charms
Allur'd Eumelus to her virgin-arms;

℣. 1047. *Minerva, life-like on imbody'd air,*
Impress'd the form, etc.]

We have here an imaginary being introduced by the poet: the whole is managed with great judgment; it is short, because it has not a direct and immediate relation to the progress of the poem, and because such imaginary entercourses have ever been looked upon as sudden in appearance, and as sudden in vanishing away. The use the poet makes of it, is to relieve Penelope from the extremity of despair, that she may act her part in the future scenes with courage and constancy. We see it is Minerva who sends this phantom to Penelope to comfort her: now this is an allegory to express, that as soon as the violence of sorrow was over, the mind of Penelope returned to some degree of tranquillity: Minerva is no more than the result of her own reflection and wisdom, which banished from her breast those melancholy apprehensions. The manner likewise of its introduction is not less judicious; the mind is apt to dwell upon those objects in sleep which make a deep impression when awake: this is the foundation of the poet's fiction; it is no more than a dream which he here describes, but he clothes it with a body, gives it a momentary existence, and by this method exalts a low circumstance into dignity and poetry.

A ſceptred lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
Of Theſſaly wide ſtretch'd his ample reign:)
As Pallas will'd, along the ſable ſkies
To calm the queen the phantom ſiſter flies.
Swift on the regal dome deſcending right,
The bolted valves are pervious to her flight.
Cloſe to her head the pleaſing viſion ſtands,
And thus performs Minerva's high commands.

O why, Penelope, this cauſeleſs fear,
To render ſleep's ſoft bleſſing unſincere?
Alike devote to ſorrow's dire extreme
The day reflection, and the midnight dream!
Thy ſon, the Gods propitious will reſtore,
And bid thee ceaſe his abſence to deplore.

To whom the queen, (whilſt yet her penſive mind
Was in the ſilent gates of ſleep confin'd)
O ſiſter, to my ſoul for ever dear,
Why this firſt viſit to reprove my fear?
How in a realm ſo diſtant ſhould you know
From what deep ſource my ceaſeleſs ſorrows flow?
To all my hope my royal lord is loſt,
His country's buckler, and the Grecian boaſt:
And with conſummate woe to weigh me down,
The heir of all his honours, and his crown.

℣. 1073. *And with conſummate woe*, etc.] In the original, Penelope ſays plainly, ſhe is more concerned for her ſon than her huſband. I ſhall tranſlate Dacier's obſervation upon this paſſage. We ought not to reproach Penelope for this ſeemingly ſhocking declaration,

My darling ſon is fled! an eaſy prey
To the fierce ſtorms, or men more fierce than they:
Who in a league of blood aſſociates ſworn,
Will intercept th' unwary youth's return.

Courage reſume, the ſhadowy form reply'd,
In the protecting care of heav'n confide:
On him attends the blue-ey'd martial maid;
What earthly can implore a ſurer aid?
Me now the guardian goddeſs deigns to ſend,
To bid the patient his return attend.

The queen replies: if in the bleſt abodes,
A goddeſs thou, haſt commerce with the Gods:
Say, breathes my lord the bliſsful realm of light,
Or lies he wrapt in ever-during night?

in preferring a ſon to an huſband: her ſentiment is natural and juſt; ſhe had all the reaſon in the world to believe that Ulyſſes was dead, ſo that all her hopes, all her affection was entirely placed upon Telemachus: his loſs therefore muſt unavoidably touch her with the higheſt degree of ſenſibility; if he is loſt, ſhe can have recourſe to no ſecond comfort. But why may we not allow the reaſon which Penelope herſelf gives for this ſuperiority of ſorrow for Telemachus? 'Telemachus, 'ſays ſhe, is unexperienced in the world, and unable 'to contend with difficulties; whereas Ulyſſes knew 'how to extricate himſelf upon all emergencies.' This is a ſufficient reaſon why ſhe ſhould fear more for Telemachus than Ulyſſes: her affection might be greater for Ulyſſes than Telemachus, yet her fears might be ſtronger for the ſon than the huſband, Ulyſſes being capable to ſurmount dangers by experience, Telemachus being new to all difficulties.

Enquire not of his doom, the phantom cries,
I ſpeak not all the counſel of the ſkies:
Nor muſt indulge with vain diſcourſe, or long,
The windy ſatisfaction of the tongue.
Swift through the valves the viſionary fair
Repaſs'd, and viewleſs mix'd with common air.
The queen awakes, deliver'd of her woes:
With florid joy her heart dilating glows:
The viſion, manifeſt of future fate,
Makes her with hope her ſon's arrival wait.
Mean time the ſuitors plow the wat'ry plain,
Telemachus in thought already ſlain!
When ſight of leſs'ning Ithaca was loſt,
Their ſail directed for the Samian coaſt,
A ſmall but verdant iſle appear'd in view,
And Aſteris th' advancing pilot knew:
An ample port the rocks projected form,
To break the rowling waves, and ruffling ſtorm:

℣. 1089. *Enquire not of his doom*, etc.] It may be aſked, what is the reaſon of this conduct, and why ſhould the phantom refuſe to relate any thing concerning the condition of Ulyſſes? Euſtathius anſwers, that if the phantom had related the full truth of the ſtory, the poem had been at an end; the very conſtitution of it requires that Ulyſſes ſhould arrive unknown to all, but chiefly to his wife, as will appear in the proſecution of the ſtory: the queſtion is very natural for an affectionate wife to make concerning an abſent husband; but this being an improper place for the diſcovery, the poet defers the ſolution of it, till the unravelling of the whole in the concluſion of the poem.

That ſafe receſs they gain with happy ſpeed,
And in cloſe ambuſh wait the murd'rous deed.

The action of this book takes up the ſpace of two nights and one day, ſo that from the opening of the poem to the introduction of Ulyſſes are ſix days compleated.

But how long a time Telemachus afterwards ſtayed with Menelaus, is a queſtion which has employed ſome modern French critics; one of which maintains, that he ſtaid no longer than theſe two nights at Lacedaemon: but it is evident, from the ſequel of the Odyſſey, that Telemachus arrived again at Ithaca two days after Ulyſſes; but Ulyſſes was twenty-nine days in paſſing from Ogygia to Ithaca, and conſequently during that whole time Telemachus muſt have been abſent from Ithaca. The ground of that critic's miſtake was from the ſilence of Homer as to the exact time of his ſtay, which was of no importance, being diſtinguiſhed by no action, and only in an epiſodical part. The ſame thing led me into the like error in the 33d note on the ſecond book, where it is ſaid that Telemachus returned to Ithaca in leſs than twelve days.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

The departure of Ulyſſes from Calypſo.

Pallas, in a council of the Gods, complains of the detention of Ulyſſes in the iſland of Calypſo; whereupon Mercury is ſent to command his removal. The ſeat of Calypſo deſcribed. She conſents with much difficulty, and Ulyſſes builds a veſſel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempeſt, in which he is ſhip-wrecked, and in the laſt danger of death; till Leucothea, a ſea-goddeſs, aſſiſts him, and after innumerable perils he gets aſhore on Phaeacia.

THE ſaffron morn, with early bluſhes ſpread,
Now roſe refulgent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal ſight,
And gild the courts of heav'n with ſacred light.

NOTES.

Ulyſſes makes his firſt entry in this book. It may be aſked, where properly is the beginning of the action? It is not neceſſary that the beginning of the action ſhould be the beginning of the poem; there is a natural and an artificial order, and Homer makes uſe of the latter. The action of the Odyſſey properly begins neither with

Then met th' eternal ſynod of the ſky,
Before the God who thunders from on high,
Supreme in might, ſublime in majeſty.
Pallas, to theſe, deplores th' unequal fates
Of wiſe Ulyſſes, and his toils relates;
Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying Pow'r,
The nymph's ſeducements, and the magic bow'r.

the poem, nor with the appearance of Ulyſſes here, but with the relation he makes of his departure from Troy in the ninth book. Boſſu has very judiciouſly remarked, that in the conſtitution of the fable, the poet ought not to make the departure of a prince from his own country the foundation of his poem, but his return, and his ſtay in other places involuntary. For if the ſtay of Ulyſſes had been voluntary, he would have been guilty, in ſome degree, of all the diſorders that happened during his abſence. Thus in this book Ulyſſes firſt appears in a deſolate iſland, ſitting in tears by the ſide of the ocean, and looking upon it as the obſtacle to his return.

This artificial order is of great uſe; it cuts off all languiſhing and unentertaining incidents, and paſſes over thoſe intervals of time that are void of action; it gives continuity to the ſtory, and at firſt tranſports the reader into the middle of the ſubject. In the beginning of the Odyſſey, the Gods command Mercury to go down to the iſland of Ogygia, and charge Calypſo to diſmiſs Ulyſſes: one would think the poem was to end in the compaſs of a few lines, the poet beginning the action ſo near the end of the ſtory; and we wonder how he finds matter to fill up his poem, in the little ſpace of time that intervenes between his firſt appearance and his re-eſtabliſhment.

This book, as well as the firſt, opens with an aſſembly of the Gods. This is done to give an importance

Thus ſhe began her plaint. Immortal Jove!
And you who fill the bliſsful ſeats above!
Let kings no more with gentle mercy ſway,
Or bleſs a people willing to obey,
But cruſh the nations with an iron rod,
And every monarch be the ſcourge of God:
If from your thoughts Ulyſſes you remove,
Who rul'd his ſubjects with a father's love.

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to his poem, and to prepare the mind of the reader to expect every thing that is great and noble, when heaven is engaged in the care and protection of his heroes. Both theſe aſſemblies are placed very properly, ſo as not to interrupt the ſeries of action: the firſt aſſembly of the Gods is only preparatory to introduce the action: and the ſecond is no more than a bare tranſition from Telemachus to Ulyſſes; from the recital of the tranſactions in Ithaca, to what more immediately regards the perſon of Ulyſſes.

In the former council, both the voyage of Telemachus and the return of Ulyſſes were determined at the ſame time: the day of that aſſembly is the firſt day both of the *principal action*, which is the return of Ulyſſes, and of the *incident*, which is the voyage of Telemachus; with this difference, that the incident was immediately put in practice, by the deſcent of Minerva to Ithaca; and the execution of it takes up the four preceding books; whereas the principal action was only then prepared, and the execution deferred to the preſent book, where Mercury is actually ſent to Calypſo.

Euſtathius therefore judges rightly when he ſays, that in the firſt council, the ſafety alone of Ulyſſes was propoſed; but the means how to bring it about are here under conſultation, which makes the neceſſity of the ſecond council.

Sole in an iſle, encircled by the main,
Abandon'd, baniſh'd from his native reign,
Unbleſt he ſighs, detain'd by lawleſs charms,
And preſs'd unwilling in Calypſo's arms.
Nor friends are there, nor veſſels to convey,
Nor oars to cut th' immeaſurable way.
And now fierce traitors, ſtudious to deſtroy
His only ſon, their ambuſh'd fraud employ,
Who pious, following his great father's fame,
To ſacred Pylos and to Sparta came.
 What words are theſe (reply'd the Pow'r who forms
The clouds of night, and darkens heav'n with ſtorms)
Is not already in thy ſoul decreed,
The chief's return ſhall make the guilty bleed?
What cannot wiſdom do? Thou may'ſt reſtore
The ſon in ſafety to his native ſhore;
While the fell foes who late in ambuſh lay,
With fraud defeated meaſure back their way.
 Then thus to Hermes the command was giv'n.
Hermes, thou choſen meſſenger of heav'n!
Go, to the nymph be theſe our orders born:
'Tis Jove's decree Ulyſſes ſhall return:
The patient man ſhall view his old abodes,
Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods;

ỳ. 43. *Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods.*] This paſſage is intricate: why ſhould Jupiter command Ulyſſes to return without the guidance either of man or God? Ulyſſes had been juſt declared the care of heaven, why ſhould he be thus ſuddenly abandoned? Euſtathi-

In twice ten days ſhall fertile Scheria find,
Alone, and floating to the wave and wind.

us anſwers, that it is ſpoken ſolely with reſpect to the voyage which he immediately undertakes. This indeed ſhews a reaſon why this command is given; if he had been under the guidance of a god, the ſhipwreck (that great incident which brings about the whole cataſtrophe of the poem) muſt have been prevented by his power; and as for men, where were they to be procured in a deſolate iſland? What confirms this opinion is, that during the whole ſhipwreck of Ulyſſes, there is no interpoſition of a deity, nor even of Pallas, who uſed to be his conſtant guardian; the reaſon is, becauſe this command of Jupiter forbids all aſſiſtance to Ulyſſes: Leucothea indeed aſſiſts him, but it is not till he is ſhipwrecked. It appears further, that this interdiction reſpects only the voyage from Ogygia, becauſe Jupiter orders that there ſhall be no aſſiſtance from man, ὔτε θεῶν πομπῇ, ὔτ' ἀνθρώπων; but Ulyſſes is tranſported from Phaeacia to Ithaca, ἀνθρώπων πομπῇ, or by the aſſiſtance of the Phaeacians, as Euſtathius obſerves; and therefore what Jupiter here ſpeaks has relation only to the preſent voyage. Dacier underſtands this to be meant of any *viſible* aſſiſtance only: but this ſeems a colluſion; for whether the Gods aſſiſt viſibly or inviſibly, the effects are the ſame; and a deity unſeen might have preſerved Ulyſſes from ſtorms, and directly guided him to his own country. But it was neceſſary for the deſign of Homer, that Ulyſſes ſhould not ſail directly home; if he had, there had been no room for the relation of his own adventures, and all thoſe ſurpriſing narrations he makes to the Phaeacians; Homer therefore, to bring about the ſhipwreck of Ulyſſes, withdraws the Gods.

℣. 45. *Alone, and floating to the wave.*] The word in the original is σχεδίης; νηὸς, as Euſtathius obſerves,

The bold Phaeacians there, whoſe haughty line
Is mixt with Gods, half human, half divine,

is underſtood: it ſignifies, continues he, a ſmall veſſel made of one entire piece of wood, or a veſſel about which little wood is uſed; it is derived from σχεδὸν, from being ἀυτοσχεδίως συμπεπῆχθαι, or it being compacted together with eaſe. Heſychius defines σχεδία to be, μικρα ναῦς ἢ ξύλα ἃ συνδέυσι, καὶ ὕτω πλέυσι: that is, a ſmall bark, or float of wood which ſailors bind together, and immediately uſe in navigation. This obſervation appeared to me very neceſſary, to take off an objection made upon a following paſſage in this book: the critics have thought it incredible that Ulyſſes ſhould, without any aſſiſtance, build ſuch a veſſel, as Homer deſcribes; but if we remember what kind of a veſſel it is, it may be reconciled to probability.

ỷ. 46. ——*Whoſe haughty line*
Is mix'd with Gods.]

The Phaeacians were the inhabitants of Scheria, ſometimes called Drepane, afterwards Corcyra, now Corfu, in the poſſeſſion of the Venetians. But it may be aſked in what theſe people reſemble the Gods? they are deſcribed as a moſt effeminate nation: whence then this God-like quality? Euſtathius anſwers, that is either from their undiſturbed felicity, or from their divine quality of general benevolence: he prefers the latter; but from the general character of the Phaeacians, I ſhould prefer the former. Homer frequently deſcribes the Gods as ἀεὶ ῥεῖα ζώοντες, *the Gods that live in endleſs eaſe*: this is ſuitable to the Phaeacians, as will appear more fully in the ſequel of the Odyſſey. Euſtathius remarks, that the poet here gives us in a few lines the heads of the eight ſucceeding books; and ſure nothing can be a greater inſtance of Homer's art, than his building ſo noble an edifice upon ſo ſmall a foundation: the plan is ſimple and unadorned, but he embelliſhes it with all the beauties in nature.

The chief ſhall honour as ſome heav'nly gueſt,
And ſwift tranſport him to his place of reſt.
His veſſels loaded with a plenteous ſtore
Of braſs, of veſtures, and reſplendent ore;
(A richer prize than if his joyful iſle
Receiv'd him charg'd with Ilion's noble ſpoil)
His friends, his country he ſhall ſee, though late;
Such is our ſovereign will, and ſuch is fate.
He ſpoke. The God who mounts the winged winds
Faſt to his feet the golden pinions binds,
That high through fields of air his flight ſuſtain
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundleſs main.
He graſps the wand that cauſes ſleep to fly,
Or in ſoft ſlumber ſeals the wakeful eye:

ỳ. 56. *The God who mounts the winged winds.*] This is a noble deſcription of Mercury; the verſes are lofty and ſonorous. Virgil has inſerted them in his Æneis, lib. iv. 240.

———— *pedibus talaria nectit*
Aurea: quae ſublimem alis, ſive aequora ſupra,
Seu terram, rapido pariter cum flamine portant.
Tum virgam capit: hac animas ille evocat Orco
Pallentes, alias ſub triſtia Tartara mittit;
Dat ſomnos adimitque, et lumina morte reſignat.

What is here ſaid of the rod of Mercury, is, as Euſtathius obſerves, an allegory: it is intended to ſhew the force of eloquence, which has a power to calm, or excite; to raiſe a paſſion, or compoſe it: Mercury is the God of eloquence, and he may very properly be ſaid θέλγειν, καὶ ἀγείρειν, to cool or inflame the paſſions according to the allegorical ſenſe of theſe expreſſions.

Then ſhoots from heav'n to high Pieria's ſteep,
And ſtoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So watry fowl, that ſeek their fiſhy food,
With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood,
Now ſailing ſmooth the level ſurface ſweep,
Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.
Thus o'er the world of waters Hermes flew,
Till now the diſtant iſland roſe in view:
Then ſwift aſcending from the azure wave,
He took the path that winded to the cave.
Large was the grot, in which the nymph he found,
(The fair-hair'd nymph with ev'ry beauty crown'd)

℣. 64. *So watry fowl.*] Euſtathius remarks, that this is a very juſt alluſion; had the poet compared Mercury to an eagle, though the compariſon had been more noble, yet it had been leſs proper: a ſea-fowl moſt properly repreſents the paſſage of a deity over the ſeas; the compariſon being adapted to the element.

Some antient critics marked the laſt verſe τῷ ἴκελος, etc. with an obeliſk, a ſign that it ought to be rejected: they thought that the word ὀχήσατο did not ſufficiently expreſs the ſwiftneſs of the flight of Mercury; the word implies no more than *he was carried*: but this expreſſion is applicable to any degree of ſwiftneſs; for where is the impropriety, if we ſay, Mercury was born along the ſeas with the utmoſt rapidity? The word is moſt properly applied to a chariot, ἐπὶ ὄχυ, ὅ ἐϛὶν ἅρμαλος. Euſtathius.

℣. 72. *The nymph he found.*] Homer here introduces an epiſode of Calypſo: and as every incident ought to have ſome relation to the main deſign of the poem, it may be aſked, what relation this bears to the other parts of it? A very eſſential one: the ſufferings of Ulyſſes

She sat and sung; the rocks resound her lays:
The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze:

are the subject of the Odyssey: here we find him inclosed in an island: all his calamities arise from his absence from his own country: Calypso then who detains him is the cause of all his calamities. It is with great judgment that the poet feigns him to be restrained by a deity, rather than a mortal. It might have appeared somewhat derogatory from the prudence and courage of Ulysses, not to have been able, by art or strength, to have freed himself from the power of a mortal: but, by this conduct, the poet at once excuses his hero, and aggravates his misfortunes: he is detained involuntarily, but it is a goddess who detains him, and it is no disgrace for a man not to be able to overpower a deity.

Bossu observes, that the art of disguise is part of the character of Ulysses: now this is implied in the name of Calypso, which signifies *concealment*, or *secret*. The poet makes his hero stay seven whole years with this goddess; she taught him so well, that he afterwards lost no opportunities of putting her instructions in practice, and does nothing without disguise.

Virgil has borrowed part of his description of Circe in the 7th book of the Æneis, from this of Calypso.

——— ubi Solis filia lucos
Assiduo resonat cantu, tectisque superbis
Urit odoratam nocturna in lumina cedrum,
Arguto tenues percurrens pectine telas.

What I have here said shews likewise the necessity of this machine of Mercury: it is an established rule of Horace:

Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
Inciderit.

Calypso was a goddess, and consequently all human

Cedar and frankincenſe, an od'rous pile,
Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the iſle;
While ſhe with work and ſong the time divides,
And through the loom the golden ſhuttle guides,
Without the grot, a various ſylvan ſcene
Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quiv'ring play'd,
And nodding cypreſs form'd a fragrant ſhade;
On whoſe high branches, waving with the ſtorm,
The birds of broadeſt wing their manſion form,
The chough, the ſea-mew, the loquacious crow,
And ſcream aloft, and ſkim the deeps below.
Depending vines the ſhelving cavern ſcreen,
With purple cluſters bluſhing through the green.

means were inſufficient to deliver Ulyſſes. There was therefore a neceſſity to have recourſe to the Gods.

ỳ. 80. *The bower of Calypſo.*] It is impoſſible for a painter to draw a more admirable rural landſhip: the bower of Calypſo is the principal figure, ſurrounded with a ſhade of different trees: green meadows, adorned with flowers, beautiful fountains, and vines loaded with cluſters of grapes, and birds hovering in the air, are ſeen in the livelieſt colours in Homer's poetry. But whoever obſerves the particular trees, plants, birds, etc. will find another beauty of propriety in this deſcription, every part being adapted, and the whole ſcene drawn agreeable to a country ſituate by the ſea.

ỳ. 89. *The purple cluſters bluſhing through the green.*] Euſtathius endeavours to fix the ſeaſon of the year when Ulyſſes departed from that iſland: he concludes it to be in the latter end of autumn, or the beginning of winter; for Calypſo is deſcribed as making uſe of a fire; ſo is

Four limpid fountains from the clefts distill,
And every fountain pours a sev'ral rill,
In mazy windings wand'ring down the hill:
Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown'd,
And glowing violets threw odors round.
A scene, where if a God should cast his sight,
A God might gaze, and wander with delight!
Joy touch'd the messenger of heav'n: he stay'd
Entranc'd, and all the blissful haunt survey'd.
Him, ent'ring in the cave, Calypso knew,
For pow'rs celestial to each other's view
Stand still confest, though distant far they lie
Or habitants of earth, or sea or sky.
But sad Ulysses by himself apart,
Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart;

Arete in the sixth book, and Eumaeus and Ulysses in other parts of the Odyssey. This gives us reason to conclude, that the summer heats were past; and what makes it still more probable is, that a vine is in this place said to be loaded with grapes, which plainly confines the season of the year to the autumn.

℣. 103. *But sad Ulysses by himself apart.*] Eustathius imagines, that the poet describes Ulysses absent from Calypso, to the end that Calypso might lay a seeming obligation upon Ulysses, by appearing to dismiss him voluntarily: for Ulysses being absent, could not know that Mercury had commanded his departure; so that this favour appears to proceed from the sole kindness of the goddess. Dacier dislikes this observation, and shews that decency requires the absence of Ulysses; if the poet had described him in the company of Calypso, it might have given suspicion of an amorous disposition,

All on the lonely ſhore he ſat to weep,
And roll'd his eyes around the reſtleſs deep;
Tow'rd his lov'd coaſt he roll'd his eyes in vain,
Till dimm'd with riſing grief, they ſtream'd again.
Now graceful ſeated on her ſhining throne,
To Hermes thus the nymph divine begun.
God of the golden wand! on what beheſt
Arriv'ſt thou here, an unexpected gueſt?
Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay:
'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.
Till now a ſtranger, in a happy hour
Approach, and taſte the dainties of my bow'r.
Thus having ſpoke, the nymph the table ſpread,
(Ambroſial cates, with nectar roſie red)
Hermes the hoſpitable rite partook,
Divine refection! then recruited, ſpoke.
What mov'd this journey from my native ſky,
A goddeſs aſks, nor can a God deny:
Hear then the truth. By mighty Jove's command
Unwilling, have I trod this pleaſing land;

and he might ſeem content with his abſence from his country: but the very nature of the poem requires that he ſhould be continually endeavouring to return to it: the poet therefore, with great judgment, deſcribes him agreeably to his character, his mind is entirely taken up with his misfortunes, and neglecting all the pleaſures which a goddeſs could confer, he entertains himſelf with his own melancholy reflections, ſitting in ſolitude upon the ſea-ſhores.

For who, ſelf-mov'd, with weary wing would ſweep
Such length of ocean and unmeaſur'd deep?
A world of waters! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or ſacred altars blaze.
But to Jove's will ſubmiſſion we muſt pay;
What pow'r ſo great, to dare to diſobey?
A man, he ſays, a man reſides with thee,
Of all his kind moſt worn with miſery:
The Greeks (whoſe arms for nine long years employ'd
Their force on Ilion, in the tenth deſtroy'd)
At length embarking in a luckleſs hour,
With conqueſt proud, incens'd Minerva's pow'r:
Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd,
With ſtorms purſued them through the liquid world.
There all his veſſels ſunk beneath the wave!
There all his dear companions found their grave!
Sav'd from the jaws of death by heav'n's decree,
The tempeſt drove him to theſe ſhores and thee.
Him, Jove now orders to his native lands
Strait to diſmiſs; ſo deſtiny commands:
Impatient fate his near return attends,
And calls him to his country, and his friends.

Ev'n to her inmoſt ſoul the goddeſs ſhook;
Then thus her anguiſh and her paſſion broke.
Ungracious Gods! with ſpite and envy curſt!
Still to your own aetherial race the worſt!
Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
And love, the only ſweet of life, deſtroy.

Did ever goddess by her charms ingage
A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?
So when Aurora sought Orion's love,
Her joys disturb'd your blissful hours above,
Till in Ortygia, Dian's winged dart
Had pierc'd the hapless hunter to the heart.
So when the covert of the thrice ear'd field
Saw stately Ceres to her passion yield,
Scarce could Iasion taste her heav'nly charms,
But Jove's swift lightning scorch'd him in her arms.

ỳ. 155 *Orion.*] The love of Calypso to Ulysses might seem too bold a fiction, and contrary to all credibility, Ulysses being a mortal, she a goddess: Homer therefore to soften the relation, brings in instances of the like passion, in Orion and Iasion; and by this he fully justifies his own conduct, the poet being at liberty to make use of any prevailing story, though it were all fable and fiction.

But why should the death of Orion be here ascribed to Diana; whereas in other places, she is said to exercise her power only over women? The reason is, she slew him for offering violence to her chastity; for though Homer be silent about his crime, yet Horace relates it.

——— *Integrae*
Tentator Orion Dianae
Virginea domitus sagitta.

Eustathius gives another reason why Aurora is said to be in love with Orion. He was a great hunter, as appears from the eleventh book of the Odyssey; and the morning or Aurora is most favourable to those diversions.

ỳ. 161. *Scarce could Iasion,* etc.] Ceres is here understood allegorically, to signify the earth; Iasion was

And is it now my turn, ye mighty pow'rs!
Am I the envy of your bliſsful bow'rs?
A man, an outcaſt to the ſtorm and wave,
It was my crime to pity, and to ſave;
When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,
And ſunk his brave companions in the main.

a great huſbandman, and conſequently Ceres may eaſily be feigned to be in love with him: the thunderbolt with which he is ſlain, ſignifies the exceſs of heat, which frequently diſappoints the hopes of the labourer. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 165. *A man, an outcaſt to the ſtorm and wave,*
It was my crime to pity, and to ſave, etc.] Homer in this ſpeech of Calypſo ſhews very naturally how paſſion miſguides the underſtanding. She views her own cauſe in the moſt advantageous, but falſe light, and thence concludes, that Jupiter offers a piece of injuſtice in commanding the departure of Ulyſſes: ſhe tells Mercury, that it is ſhe who had preſerved his life, who had entertained him with affection, and offered him immortality; and would Jupiter thus repay her tenderneſs to Ulyſſes? Would Jupiter force him from a place where nothing was wanting to his happineſs, and expoſe him again to the like dangers from which ſhe had preſerved him? this was an act of cruelty. But on the contrary, ſhe ſpeaks not one word concerning the truth of the cauſe: viz. that ſhe offered violence to the inclinations of Ulyſſes; that ſhe made him miſerable by detaining him, not only from his wife, but from his whole dominions; and never conſiders that Jupiter is juſt in delivering him from his captivity. This is a very lively, though unhappy picture of human nature, which is too apt to fall into error, and then endeavours to juſtify an error by a ſeeming reaſon. Dacier.

Alone, abandon'd, in mid ocean toſt,
The ſport of winds, and driv'n from ev'ry coaſt,
Hither this man of miſeries I led,
Receiv'd the friendleſs, and the hungry fed;
Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd!) to beſtow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
'Tis paſt——and Jove decrees he ſhall remove;
Gods as we are, we are but ſlaves to Jove.
Go then he may (he muſt, if he ordain)
Try all thoſe dangers, all thoſe deeps, again.
But never, never ſhall Calypſo ſend
To toils like theſe, her huſband and her friend.
What ſhips have I, what ſailors to convey,
What oars to cut the long laborious way?
Yet, I'll direct the ſafeſt means to go:
That laſt advice is all I can beſtow.
  To her, the Pow'r who bears the charming rod.
Diſmiſs the man, nor irritate the God;
Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,
For what ſo dreadful as the wrath of Jove?
Thus having ſaid, he cut the cleaving ſky,
And in a moment vaniſh'd from her eye.
The nymph, obedient to divine command,
To ſeek Ulyſſes, pac'd along the ſand.
Him penſive on the lonely beach ſhe found
With ſtreaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
And inly pining for his native ſhore;
For now the ſoft enchantreſs pleas'd no more:

For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,
Absent he lay in her desiring arms,
In slumber wore the heavy night away,
On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day;
There sat all desolate, and sigh'd alone,
With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
Till dim'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

ỿ. 198. *Absent he lay in her desiring arms.*] This passage has fallen under the severe censure of the critics, they condemn it as an act of conjugal infidelity, and a breach of morality in Ulysses: it would be sufficient to answer, that a poet is not obliged to draw a perfect character in the person of his hero: perfection is not to be found in human life, and consequently ought not to be ascribed to it in poetry: neither Achilles nor Æneas are perfect characters: Æneas in particular is as guilty, with respect to Dido, in the desertion of her, (for Virgil tells us they were married, *connubio jungam stabili*) as Ulysses can be imagined to be by the most severe critic, with respect to Calypso.

But those, who have blamed this passage, form their judgments from the morality of these ages, and not from the theology of the antients; polygamy was then allowed, and even concubinage, without being esteemed any breach of conjugal fidelity: if this be not admitted, the heathen Gods are as guilty as the heathen heroes, and Jupiter and Ulysses are equally criminals.

This very passage shews the sincere affection which Ulysses retained for his wife Penelope; even a goddess cannot persuade him to forget her; his person is in the power of Calypso, but his heart is with Penelope. Tully had this book of Homer in his thought when he said of Ulysses, *Vetulam suam praetulit immortalitati.*

Here, on his musing mood the goddess prest,
Approaching soft; and thus the chief addrest.
Unhappy man! to wasting woes a prey,
No more in sorrows languish life away:
Free as the winds I give thee now to rove—
Go, fell the timber of yon' lofty grove,
And form a raft, and build the rising ship,
Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.
To store the vessel let the care be mine,
With water from the rock, and rosy wine,
And life sustaining bread, and fair array,
And prosp'rous gales to waft thee on thy way.
These, if the Gods with my desires comply,
(The Gods, alas! more mighty far than I,
And better skill'd in dark events to come)
In peace shall land thee at thy native home.
With sighs, Ulysses heard the words she spoke,
Then thus his melancholy silence broke.

ỿ. 222. *Then thus his melancholy silence broke.*] It may be asked what occasions this conduct in Ulysses? he has long been desirous to return to his country, why then is he melancholy at the proposal of it? This proceeds from his apprehensions of insincerity in Calypso: he had long been unable to obtain his dismission with the most urgent entreaties: this voluntary kindness therefore seems suspicious. He is ignorant that Jupiter had commanded his departure, and therefore fears lest his obstinate desire of leaving her should have provoked her to destroy him, under a shew of complying with his inclinations. This is an instance that Ulysses is not only wise in extricating himself from difficulties, but cautious in guarding against dangers.

Some other motive, goddeſs! ſways thy mind,
(Some cloſe deſign, or turn of womankind)
Nor my return the end, nor this the way,
On a ſlight raft to paſs the ſwelling ſea
Huge, horrid, vaſt! where ſcarce in ſafety ſails
The beſt built ſhip, though Jove inſpire the gales.
The bold propoſal how ſhall I fulfill?
Dark as I am, unconſcious of thy will.
Swear then, thou mean'ſt not what my ſoul forbodes;
Swear, by the ſolemn oath that binds the Gods.
  Him, while he ſpoke, with ſmiles Calypſo ey'd,
And gently graſp'd his hand, and thus reply'd.
This ſhews thee, friend, by old experience taught,
And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought.
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wiſe?
But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye ſacred ſkies!

ỳ. 238. *But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye ſacred ſkies!*] The oath of Calypſo is introduced with the utmoſt ſolemnity. Rapin allows it to be an inſtance of true ſublimity. The antients atteſted all nature in their oaths, that all nature might conſpire to puniſh their perjuries. Virgil has imitated this paſſage, but has not copied the full beauty of the original.

Eſto nunc ſol teſtis, et haec mihi terra precanti.

It is the remark of Grotius, that the like expreſſion is found in Deuteronomy, *Hear, oh ye heavens, the words that I ſpeak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.* Which may almoſt literally be rendered by this verſe of Homer.

Ἴστω νῦν τόδε γαῖα, καὶ οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὕπερθεν.

And thou, oh Styx! whoſe formidable floods
Glide through the ſhades, and bind th' atteſting Gods!
No form'd deſign, no meditated end
Lurks in the counſel of thy faithful friend;
Kind the perſuaſion, and ſincere my aim;
The ſame my practice, were my fate the ſame.
Heav'n has not curſt me with a heart of ſteel,
But giv'n the ſenſe, to pity and to feel.

Thus having ſaid, the goddeſs march'd before:
He trod her footſteps in the ſandy ſhore.
At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their ſtate;
He fill'd the throne where Mercury had ſate,
For him, the nymph a rich repaſt ordains,
Such as the mortal life of man ſuſtains;

℣. 251. *For him, the nymph a rich repaſt ordains.*] The paſſion of love is no where deſcribed in all Homer, but in this paſſage between Calypſo and Ulyſſes; and we find that the poet is not unſucceſsful in drawing the tender, as well as the fiercer paſſions. This ſeemingly trifling circumſtance is an inſtance of it; love delights to oblige, and the leaſt offices receive a value from the perſon who performs them: this is the reaſon why Calypſo ſerves Ulyſſes with her own hands: her damſels attend her, but love makes it a pleaſure to her to attend Ulyſſes. Euſtathius.

Calypſo ſhews more fondneſs for Ulyſſes, than Ulyſſes for Calypſo: indeed Ulyſſes had been no leſs than ſeven years in the favour of that goddeſs; it was a kind of matrimony, and huſbands are not altogether ſo fond as lovers. But the true reaſon is, a more tender behaviour had been contrary to the character of Ulyſſes; it is neceſſary that his ſtay ſhould be by conſtraint, that

Before herſelf were plac'd the cates divine,
Ambroſial banquet, and celeſtial wine.
Their hunger ſatiate, and their thirſt repreſt,
Thus ſpoke Calypſo to her god-like gueſt.
Ulyſſes! (with a ſigh ſhe thus began)
Oh ſprung from Gods! in wiſdom more than man.
Is then thy home the paſſion of thy heart?
Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part?
Farewel! and ever joyful may'ſt thou be,
Nor break the tranſport with one thought of me.
But, ah Ulyſſes! wert thou given to know
What fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;

he ſhould continually be endeavouring to return to his own country; and conſequently to have diſcovered too great a degree of ſatisfaction in any thing during his abſence, had outraged his character. His return is the main hinge upon which the whole Odyſſey turns, and therefore no pleaſure, not even a goddeſs, ought to divert him from it.

ℽ. 263. *But, ah Ulyſſes! wert thou giv'n to know*
What fate yet dooms thee.]
This is another inſtance of the tyranny of the paſſion of love: Calypſo had received a command to diſmiſs Ulyſſes; Mercury had laid before her the fatal conſequences of her refuſal, and ſhe had promiſed to ſend him away; but her love here again prevails over her reaſon; ſhe frames excuſes ſtill to detain him, and though ſhe dares not keep him, ſhe knows not how to part with him. This is a true picture of nature; love this moment reſolves, the next breaks theſe reſolutions: ſhe had promiſed to obey Jupiter, in not detaining Ulyſſes; but ſhe endeavours to perſuade Ulyſſes not to go away,

Thy heart might ſettle in this ſcene of eaſe,
And ev'n theſe ſlighted charms might learn to pleaſe.
A willing goddeſs and immortal life
Might baniſh from thy mind an abſent wife.
Am I inferior to a mortal dame?
Leſs ſoft my feature, leſs auguſt my frame?
Or ſhall the daughters of mankind compare
Their earth-born beauties with the heav'nly fair?
  Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)
Againſt Ulyſſes ſhall thy anger riſe?
Lov'd and ador'd, oh goddeſs as thou art,
Forgive the weakneſs of a human heart.
Though well I ſee thy graces far above
The dear, though mortal, object of my love,
Of youth eternal well the diff'rence know,
And the ſhort date of fading charms below;
Yet ev'ry day, while abſent thus I roam,
I languiſh to return, and dye at home.

℣. 277. *Though well I ſee thy graces far above*
The dear, though mortal, object of my love.] Ulyſſes ſhews great addreſs in this anſwer to Calypſo; he ſoftens the ſeverity of it, by firſt aſking a favourable acceptance of what he is about to ſay; he calls her his adored goddeſs, and places Penelope in every degree below the perfections of Calypſo. As it is the nature of women not to endure a rival, Ulyſſes aſſigns the deſire of his return to another cauſe than the love of Penelope, and aſcribes it ſolely to the love he bears his country. Euſtathius.

Whate'er the Gods ſhall deſtine me to bear
In the black ocean, or the wat'ry war,
'Tis mine to maſter with a conſtant mind;
Enur'd to perils, to the worſt reſign'd.
By ſeas, by wars, ſo many dangers run,
Still I can ſuffer, their high will be done!

Thus while he ſpoke, the beamy ſun deſcends,
And riſing night her friendly ſhade extends.
To the cloſe grot the lonely pair remove,
And ſlept delighted with the gifts of love.
When roſy morning call'd them from their reſt,
Ulyſſes rob'd him in the cloak and veſt.
The nymph's fair head a veil tranſparent grac'd,
Her ſwelling loins a radiant zone embrac'd
With flow'rs of gold: an under robe, unbound,
In ſnowy waves flow'd glitt'ring on the ground.
Forth-iſſuing thus, ſhe gave him firſt to wield
A weighty axe, with trueſt temper ſteel'd,
And double-edg'd; the handle ſmooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's eaſy grain;
And next, a wedge to drive with ſweepy ſway:
Then to the neighbouring foreſt led the way.
On the lone iſland's utmoſt verge there ſtood
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whoſe leafleſs ſummits to the ſkies aſpire,
Scorch'd by the ſun, or ſear'd by heav'nly fire:
(Already dry'd.) Theſe pointing out to view,
The nymph juſt ſhew'd him, and with tears withdrew.

Now toils the hero: trees on trees o'erthrown 311
Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan:
Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.

ℽ. 311, etc. *Ulysses builds his ship.*] This passage has fallen under censure, as outraging all probability: Rapin believes it to be impossible for one man alone to build so complete a vessel in the compass of four days; and perhaps the same opinion might lead Bossu into a mistake, who allows twenty days to Ulysses in building it; he applies the word εἴκοσι, or *twenty*, to the days, which ought to be applied to the trees; δένδρεα is understood, for the poet immediately after declares that the whole was completed in the space of four days; neither is there any thing incredible in the description. I have observed already that this vessel is but Σχεδία, a *float*, or *raft*; it is true, Ulysses cuts down twenty trees to build it; this may seem too great a provision of materials for so small an undertaking: but why should we imagine these to be large trees? the description plainly shews the contrary, for it had been impossible to have felled twenty large trees in the space of four days, much more to have built a vessel proportionable to such materials: but the vessel was but small, and consequently such were the trees. Homer call these *dry trees*; this is not inserted without reason, for green wood is unfit for navigation.

Homer, in this passage, shews his skill in mechanics; a shipwright could not have described a vessel more exactly; but what is chiefly valuable is the insight it gives us to what degree this art of ship-building was then arrived: we find likewise what use navigators made of astronomy in those ages; so that this passage deserves a double regard, as a fine piece of poetry, and a valuable remain of antiquity.

At equal angles these dispos'd to join,
He smooth'd, and squar'd 'em, by the rule and line.
(The wimbles for the work Calypso found)
With those he pierc'd them, and with clinchers bound.
Long and capacious as a shipwright forms
Some bark's broad bottom to outride the storms,
So large he built the raft: then ribb'd it strong
From space to space, and nail'd the planks along;
These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;
Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,
With crossing sail-yards dancing in the wind;
And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd.
(With yielding osiers fenc'd, to break the force
Of surging waves, and steer the steady course)
Thy loom, Calypso! for the future sails
Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales.

ỳ. 317. *The wimbles for the work Calypso found.* and ỳ. 329. *Thy loom, Calypso, for the future sails Supply'd the cloth.*]

It is remarkable that Calypso brings the tools to Ulysses at several times: this is another instance of the nature of love; it seeks opportunities to be in the company of the beloved person. Calypso is an instance of it: she frequently goes away, and frequently returns: she delays the time, by not bringing all the implements at once to Ulysses; so that though she cannot divert him from his resolutions of leaving her, yet she protracts his stay.

It may be necessary to make some observation in general upon this passage of Calypso and Ulysses. Mr. Dryden has been very severe upon it. ' What are the tears, ' says he, of Calypso for being left, to the fury and

With ſtays and cordage laſt he rigg'd the ſhip,
And roll'd on leavers, launch'd her in the deep.

'death of Dido? Where is there the whole proceſs of 'her paſſion, and all its violent effects to be found, in 'the languiſhing epiſode of the Odyſſes?' Much may be ſaid in vindication of Homer; there is a wide difference between the characters of Dido and Calypſo. Calypſo is a goddeſs, and conſequently not liable to the ſame paſſions, as an inraged woman: yet diſappointed love being always an outragious paſſion, Homer makes her break out into blaſphemies againſt Jupiter and all the Gods. 'But the ſame proceſs of love is not found in 'Homer as in Virgil;' it is true, and Homer had been very injudicious if he had inſerted it. The time allows it not; it was neceſſary for Homer to deſcribe the concluſion of Calypſo's paſſion, not the beginning or proceſs of it. It was neceſſary to carry on the main deſign of the poem, viz. the departure of Ulyſſes, in order to his re-eſtabliſhment; and not amuſe the reader with the detail of a paſſion that was ſo far from contributing to the end of the poem, that it was the greateſt impediment to it. If the poet had found an enlargement neceſſary to his deſign, had he attempted a full deſcription of the paſſion, and then failed, Mr. Dryden's criticiſm had been judicious. Virgil had a fair opportunity to expatiate, nay, the occaſion required it, inaſmuch as the love of Dido contributed to the deſign of the poem; it brought about her aſſiſtance to Æneas, and the preſervation of his companions; and conſequently the copiouſneſs of Virgil is as judicious as the conciſeneſs of Homer. I allow Virgil's to be a maſterpiece: perhaps no images are more happily drawn in all that poet; but the paſſages in the two authors are not ſimilar, and conſequently admit of no compariſon: would it not have been inſufferable in Homer, to have ſtepped ſeven years backward, to deſcribe the proceſs of Ca-

Four days were paſt, and now the work compleat
Shone the fifth morn: when from her ſacred ſeat
The nymph diſmiſt him, (od'rous garments giv'n,
And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of heav'n)
Then fill'd two goat-ſkins with her hands divine,
With water one, and one with ſable wine:
Of ev'ry kind proviſions heav'd aboard,
And the full decks with copious viands ſtor'd,
The goddeſs laſt a gentle breeze ſupplies,
To curl old Ocean, and to warm the ſkies.
And now rejoicing in the proſp'rous gales,
With beating heart Ulyſſes ſpreads his ſails;

lypſo's paſſion, when the very nature of the poem requires that Ulyſſes ſhould immediately return to his own country? ought the action to be ſuſpended for a fine deſcription? But an oppoſite conduct was judicious in both the poets, and therefore Virgil is commendable for giving us the whole proceſs of a love-paſſion in Dido, Homer for only relating the concluſion of it in Calypſo. I will only add, that Virgil has borrowed his machinery from Homer, and that the departure of Æneas and Ulyſſes is brought about by the command of Jupiter, and the deſcent of Mercury.

℣. 344. —— *Ulyſſes ſpreads his ſails*] It is obſervable that the poet paſſes over the parting of Calypſo and Ulyſſes in ſilence; he leaves it to be imagined by the reader, and proſecutes his main action. Nothing but a cold complement could have proceeded from Ulyſſes, he being overjoyed at the proſpect of returning to his country: it was therefore judicious in Homer to omit the relation: and not draw Calypſo in tears, and Ulyſſes in a tranſport of joy. Beſides, it was neceſſary to ſhorten the epiſode: the commands of Jupiter were

Plac'd at the helm he ſat, and mark'd the ſkies,
Nor cloſ'd in ſleep his ever watchful eyes.
There view'd the Pleiads, and the northern Team
And great Orion's more refulgent beam,
To which, around the axle of the ſky
The Bear revolving, points his golden eye:
Who ſhines exalted on th' etherial plain,
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
Far on the left thoſe radiant fires to keep
The nymph directed, as he ſail'd the deep.
Full ſev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way;
The diſtant land appear'd the following day:

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immediately to be obeyed; and the ſtory being now turned to Ulyſſes, it was requiſite to put him immediately upon action, and deſcribe him endeavouring to re-eſtabliſh his own affairs, which is the whole deſign of the Odyſſey.

ỳ. 355. *Full ſev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way.*] It may ſeem incredible, that one perſon ſhould be able to manage a veſſel ſeventeen days without any aſſiſtance; but Euſtathius vindicates Homer by an inſtance that very much reſembles this of Ulyſſes. A certain Pamphylian being taken priſoner, and carried to Tamiathis (afterwards Damietta) in Ægypt, continued there ſeveral years; but being continually deſirous to return to his country, he pretends a ſkill in ſea affairs; this ſucceeds, and he is immediately employed in maritime buſineſs, and permitted the liberty to follow it according to his own inclination, without any inſpection. He made uſe of this opportunity, and furniſhing himſelf with a ſail, and proviſions for a long voyage, committed himſelf to the ſea all alone; he croſſed that vaſt extent of waters that lies between Ægypt and Pamphylia, and arrived ſafely in his own country: in memory of this

Then swell'd to sight Phaeacia's dusky coast,
And woody mountains, half in vapours lost:
That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste.

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on Solime's aerial brow,

prodigious event he changed his name, and was called μονοναύτης, or the *sole-sailor*; and the family was not extinct in the days of Eustathius.

It may not be improper to observe, that this description of Ulysses sailing alone is a demonstration of the smallness of his vessel; for it is impossible that a large one could be managed by a single person. It is indeed said that twenty trees were taken down for the vessel, but this does not imply that all the trees were made use of, but only so much of them as was necessary to his purpose.

ỷ. 360. *Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste.*] This expression gives a very lively idea of an island of small extent, that is of a form more long than large: Aristarchus, instead of ῥινὸν, writes ἐρινὸν, or resembling a *fig*; others tell us, that ῥινὸν is used by the Illyrians to signify ἀχλὺν, or a *mist*; this likewise very well represents the first appearance of land to those that sail at a distance; it appears indistinct and confused, or, as it is here expressed, like a mist. Eustathius.

ỷ. 362. *From Solyme's aerial brow.*] There is some difficulty in this passage. Strabo, as Eustathius observes, affirms that the expression of Neptune's seeing Ulysses from the mountains of Solyme, is to be taken in a general sense, and not to denote the Solymean mountains in Pisidia; but other eastern mountains that bear the same appellation. In propriety, the Solymaeans inhabit the summits of mount Taurus, from Lycia even to Pisidia; these were very distant from the passage of Nep-

The king of Ocean saw, and seeing burn'd,
(From Æthiopia's happy climes return'd)
The raging monarch shook his azure head,
And thus in secret to his soul he said.

Heav'ns! how uncertain are the Pow'rs on high!
Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
In one man's favour? while a distant guest
I shar'd secure the Æthiopian feast.
Behold how near Phaeacia's land he draws!
The land, affix'd by fate's eternal laws
To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?
No, if this sceptre yet commands the main.

He spoke, and high the forky trident hurl'd,
Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the wat'ry world,
At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.

tance from the Æthiopians, and consequently could not be the mountains intended by Homer; we must therefore have recourse to the preceding assertion of Strabo, for a solution of the difficulty. Dacier endeavours to explain it another way; Who knows, says she, but that the name of Solymean was antiently extended to all very elevated mountains? Bochart affirms, that the word *Solimy* is derived from the Hebrew *Selem*, or *darkness*; why then might not this be a general appellation? But this is all conjecture, and it is much more probable that such a name should be given to some mountains by way of distinction and emphatically, from some peculiar and extraordinary quality; than extend it to all very lofty mountains, which could only introduce confusion and error.

Down ruſh'd the night. Eaſt, weſt, together roar,
And ſouth, and north, roll mountains to the ſhore;
Then ſhook the hero, to deſpair reſign'd,
And queſtion'd thus his yet unconquer'd mind.
  Wretch that I am! what farther fates attend
This life of toils, and what my deſtin'd end?
Too well alas! the iſland goddeſs knew,
On the black ſea what perils ſhould enſue.
New horrors now this deſtin'd head encloſe;
Unfill'd is yet the meaſure of my woes.
With what a cloud the brows of heav'n are crown'd?
What raging winds? what roaring waters round?
'Tis Jove himſelf the ſwelling tempeſt rears;
Death, preſent death, on every ſide appears.
Happy! thrice happy! who in battle ſlain
Preſt in Atrides' cauſe the Trojan plain:

ℽ. 393. *Happy! thrice happy! who in battle ſlain,*
Preſt in Atrides' cauſe the Trojan plain.]
Plutarch, in his Sympoſiacs, relates a memorable ſtory concerning Memmius, the Roman general: when he had ſacked the city Corinth, and made ſlaves of thoſe who ſurvived the ruin of it, he commanded one of the youths, of a liberal education, to write down ſome ſentence in his preſence, according to his own inclinations. The youth immediately wrote this paſſage from Homer.

Happy! thrice happy! who in battle ſlain,
Preſt in Atrides' cauſe the Trojan plain.]

Memmius immediately burſt into tears, and gave the youth and all his relations their liberty.

Virgil has tranſlated this paſſage in the firſt book of his Æneis. The ſtorm and the behaviour of Æneas are copied exactly from it. The ſtorm, in both the

Oh! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall;
Had ſome diſtinguiſh'd day renown'd my fall;
(Such as was that, when ſhow'rs of jav'lins fled
From conqu'ring Troy around Achilles dead)
All Greece had paid my ſolemn fun'rals then,
And ſpread my glory with the ſons of men.

poets, is deſcribed conciſely, but the images are full of terror; Homer leads the way, and Virgil treads in his ſteps without any deviation. Ulyſſes falls into lamentation, ſo does Æneas: Ulyſſes wiſhes he had found a nobler death, ſo does Æneas: this diſcovers a bravery of ſpirit, they lament not that they are to die, but only the inglorious manner of it. This fully anſwers an objection that has been made both againſt Homer and Virgil, who have been blamed for deſcribing their heroes with ſuch an air of mean-ſpiritedneſs. Drowning was eſteemed by the antients an accurſed death, as it deprived their bodies of the rites of ſepulture; it is therefore no wonder that this kind of death was greatly dreaded, ſince it barred their entrance into the happy regions of the dead for many hundreds of years.

ỳ 397. *Such as was that, when ſhow'rs of jav'lins fled*
From conqu'ring Troy around Achilles dead.]
Theſe words have relation to an action, no where deſcribed in the Iliad or Odyſſey. When Achilles was ſlain by the treachery of Paris, the Trojans made a ſally to gain his body, but Ulyſſes carried it off upon his ſhoulders, while Ajax protected him with his ſhield. The war of Troy is not the ſubject of the Iliad, and therefore relates not the death of Achilles; but, as Longinus remarks, he inſerts many actions in the Odyſſey which are the ſequel of the ſtory of the Iliad. This conduct has a very happy effect; he aggrandizes the character of Ulyſſes by theſe ſhort hiſtories, and has found out the way to make him praiſe himſelf, without vanity.

A ſhameful fate now hides my hapleſs head,
Un-wept, un-noted, and for ever dead!

A mighty wave ruſh'd o'er him as he ſpoke,
The raft it cover'd, and the maſt it broke;
Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn,
Far on the ſwelling ſurge the chief was born:
While by the howling tempeſt rent in twain
Flew ſail and ſail-yards ratling o'er the main.
Long preſs'd he heav'd beneath the weighty wave,
Clogg'd by the cumbrous veſt Calypſo gave:
At length emerging, from his noſtrils wide
And guſhing mouth, effus'd the briny tide.
Ev'n then, not mindleſs of his laſt retreat,
He ſeiz'd the raft, and leapt into his ſeat,
Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood
Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.
As when a heap of gather'd thorns is caſt
Now to, now fro, before th' autumnal blaſt;
Together clung, it rolls around the field;
So roll'd the float, and ſo its texture held:
And now the ſouth, and now the north, bear ſway,
And now the eaſt the foamy floods obey,
And now the weſt-wind whirls it o'er the ſea.

The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppreſt,
Leucothea ſaw, and pity touch'd her breaſt:

ỳ. 424. *The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppreſt, Leucothea ſaw, and pity touch'd her breaſt.*] It is not probable that Ulyſſes could eſcape ſo great a danger by his own ſtrength alone; and therefore the poet

(Herſelf a mortal once, of Cadmus' ſtrain,
But now an azure ſiſter of the main)
Swift as a ſea-mew ſpringing from the flood,
All radiant on the raft the goddeſs ſtood:
Then thus addreſs'd him. Thou, whom heav'n decrees
To Neptune's wrath, ſtern tyrant of the ſeas,
(Unequal conteſt) not his rage and pow'r,
Great as he is, ſuch virtue ſhall devour.
What I ſuggeſt thy wiſdom will perform;
Forſake thy float, and leave it to the ſtorm;
Strip off thy garments; Neptune's fury brave
With naked ſtrength, and plunge into the wave.
To reach Phaeacia all thy nerves extend,
There Fate decrees thy miſeries ſhall end.
This heav'nly ſcarf beneath thy boſom bind,
And live; give all thy terrors to the wind.

introduces Leucothea to aſſiſt in his preſervation. But it may be aſked, if this is not contradictory to the command of Jupiter in the beginning of this book? Ulyſſes is there forbid all aſſiſtance either from men or Gods; whence then is it that Leucothea preſerves him? The former paſſage is to be underſtood to imply an interdiction only of all aſſiſtance till Ulyſſes was ſhipwrecked; he was to ſuffer, not to die: thus Pallas afterwards calms the ſtorm; ſhe may be imagined to have a power over the winds, as ſhe is the daughter of Jupiter, who denotes the air, according to the obſervation of Euſtathius: here Leucothea is very properly introduced to preſerve Ulyſſes; ſhe is a ſea-goddeſs, and had been a mortal, and therefore intereſts herſelf in the cauſe of a mortal.

℣. 440. *This heav'nly ſcarf beneath thy boſom bind.*]

Soon as thy arms the happy ſhore ſhall gain,
Return the gift, and caſt it in the main;
Obſerve my orders, and with heed obey,
Caſt it far off; and turn thy eyes away.
With that, her hand the ſacred veil beſtows,
Then down the deeps ſhe div'd from whence ſhe roſe:
A moment ſnatch'd the ſhining form away,
And all was cover'd with the curling ſea.

This paſſage may ſeem extraordinary, and the poet be thought to preſerve Ulyſſes by incredible means. What virtue could there be in this ſcarf againſt the violence of ſtorms? Euſtathius very well anſwers this objection. It is evident, that the belief of the power of amulets or charms prevailed in the times of Homer; thus Moly is uſed by Ulyſſes as a preſervative againſt faſcination, and ſome charm may be ſuppoſed to be implied in the zone or caeſtus of Venus. Thus Ulyſſes may be imagined to have worn a ſcarf, or cincture, as a preſervative againſt the perils of the ſea. They conſecrated antiently Votiva, as tablets, etc. in the temples of their Gods: ſo Ulyſſes, wearing a zone conſecrated to Leucothea, may be ſaid to receive it from the hands of that goddeſs. Euſtathius obſerves, that Leucothea did not appear in the form of a bird, for then how ſhould ſhe ſpeak, or how bring this cincture or ſcarf? The expreſſion has relation only to the manner of her riſing out of the ſea, and deſcending into it; the action, not the perſon, is intended to be repreſented. Thus Minerva is ſaid in the Odyſſey, *to fly away*, ὄρνις ὡς ἀνόπαια, not in the *form*, but with the *ſwiftneſs* of an eagle. Moſt of the tranſlators have rendered this paſſage ridiculouſly, they deſcribe her in the real form of a ſea-fowl, though ſhe ſpeaks, and gives her ſcarf. So the verſion of Hobbes:

She ſpoke, in figure of a water-hen.

Struck with amaze, yet ſtill to doubt inclin'd,
He ſtands ſuſpended, and explores his mind.
What ſhall I do? Unhappy me! who knows
But other Gods intend me other woes?
Whoe'er thou art, I ſhall not blindly join
Thy pleaded reaſon, but conſult with mine:
For ſcarce in ken appears that diſtant iſle
Thy voice foretells me ſhall conclude my toil.
Thus then I judge; while yet the planks ſuſtain
The wild waves fury, here I fix'd remain:

℣. 454. ——— *I ſhall not blindly join*
Thy pleaded reaſon. ———]
Euſtathius obſerves, that this paſſage is a leſſon to inſtruct us, that ſecond reflections are preferable to our firſt thoughts; and the poet maintains the character of Ulyſſes by deſcribing him thus doubtful and cautious. But is not Ulyſſes too incredulous, who will not believe a goddeſs? and diſobedient to her, by not committing himſelf to the ſeas? Leucothea does not confine Ulyſſes to an immediate compliance with her injunctions: ſhe commands him to forſake the raſt, but leaves the time to his own diſcretion: and Ulyſſes might very juſtly be ſomewhat incredulous, when he knew that Neptune was his enemy, and contriving his deſtruction. The doubts therefore of Ulyſſes are the doubts of a wiſe man: but then, is not Ulyſſes deſcribed with a greater degree of prudence, than the goddeſs? ſhe commands him to leave the raft, he chuſes to make uſe of it till he arrives nearer the ſhores. Euſtathius directly aſcribes more wiſdom to Ulyſſes than to Leucothea. This may appear too partial; it is ſufficient to obſerve, that the command of Leucothea was general, and left the manner of the execution of it to his own prudence.

But when their texture to the tempeſt yields,
I launch advent'rous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of Gods the ſtrength of man,
And take this method, ſince the beſt I can.
While thus his thoughts an anxious council hold,
The raging God a wat'ry mountain roll'd;
Like a black ſheet the whelming billow ſpread,
Burſt o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
Planks, beams, diſparted fly: the ſcatter'd wood
Rolls diverſe, and in fragments ſtrows the flood.
So the rude Boreas, o'er the field new ſhorn,
Toſſes and drives the ſcatter'd heaps of corn.
And now a ſingle beam the chief beſtrides;
There, pois'd a while above the bounding tides,
His limbs diſ-cumbers of the clinging veſt,
And binds the ſacred cincture round his breaſt:
Then prone on ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and ſhot the ſeas along.
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern Neptune ey'd him, and contemptuous ſaid:
Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes eſſay:
Go, wander helpleſs on the wat'ry way:
Thus, thus find out the deſtin'd ſhore, and then
(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.
Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raiſe
Shall laſt remember'd in thy beſt of days.
This ſaid, his ſea-green ſteeds divide the foam,
And reach high Ægae and the tow'ry dome.

Now, ſcarce withdrawn the fierce earth ſhaking pow'r,
Jove's daughter Pallas watch'd the fav'ring hour,
Back to their caves ſhe bade the winds to fly,
And huſh'd the bluſt'ring brethren of the ſky.
The dryer blaſts alone of Boreas ſway,
And bear him ſoft on broken waves away;
With gentle force impelling to that ſhore,
Where fate has deſtin'd he ſhall toil no more.
And now two nights, and now two days were paſt,
Since wide he wander'd on the wat'ry waſte;
Heav'd on the ſurge with intermitting breath,
And hourly panting in the arms of death.
The third fair morn now blaz'd upon the main;
Then glaſſy ſmooth lay all the liquid plain,
The winds were huſh'd, the billows ſcarcely curl'd,
And a dead ſilence ſtill'd the wat'ry world.
When lifted on a ridgy wave, he ſpies
The land at diſtance, and with ſharpen'd eyes.

℣. 496. *And now two nights, and now two days were paſt.*] It may be thought incredible that any perſon ſhould be able to contend ſo long with a violent ſtorm, and at laſt ſurvive it: it is allowed that this could ſcarce be done by the natural ſtrength of Ulyſſes; but the poet has ſoftened the narration, by aſcribing his preſervation to the cincture of Leucothea. The poet likewiſe very judiciouſly removes Neptune, that Ulyſſes may not appear to be preſerved againſt the power of that God; and to reconcile it intirely to credibility, he introduces Pallas, who calms the winds and compoſes the waves, to make way for his preſervation.

As pious children joy with vaſt delight
When a lov'd ſire revives before their ſight,
(Who ling'ring long has call'd on death in vain,
Fixt by ſome daemon to his bed of pain,

ỳ. 506. *As pious children joy with vaſt delight.*] This is a very beautiful compariſon, and well adapted to the occaſion. We miſtake the intention of it, as Euſtathius obſerves, if we imagine that Homer intended to compare the perſon of Ulyſſes to theſe children: it is introduced ſolely to expreſs the joy which he conceives at the ſight of land: if we look upon it in any other view, the reſemblance is loſt; for the children ſuffer not themſelves, but Ulyſſes is in the utmoſt diſtreſs. Theſe images, drawn from common life, are particularly affecting; they have relation to every man, as every man may poſſibly be in ſuch circumſtances: other images may be more noble, and yet leſs pleaſing; they may raiſe our admiration, but thoſe engage our affections.

ỳ. 509. *Fix'd by ſome daemon to his bed of pain.*] It was a prevailing opinion among the antients, that the Gods were the authors of all diſeaſes incident to mankind. Hippocrates himſelf confeſſes that he had found ſome diſtempers, in which the hand of the Gods was manifeſt, θεῖον τι, as Dacier obſerves. In this place this aſſertion has a peculiar beauty, it ſhews that the malady was not contracted by any vice of the father, but inflicted by an evil daemon. Nothing is more evident, than that every perſon was ſuppoſed, by the antients, to have a good and bad daemon attending him; what the Greeks called a daemon, the Romans named a genius. I confeſs that this is no where directly affirmed in Homer, but, as Plutarch obſerves, it is plainly intimated. In the ſecond book of the Iliad, the word is uſed both in a good and bad ſenſe; when Ulyſſes addreſſes himſelf to the generals of the army, he ſays Δαιμόνιε, in the better

Till heav'n by miracle his life reſtore)
So joys Ulyſſes at the appearing ſhore;
And ſees (and labours onward as he ſees)
The riſing foreſts, and the tufted trees.
And now, as near approaching as the ſound
Of human voice the liſt'ning ear may wound,
Amidſt the rocks he hears a hollow roar
Of murm'ring ſurges breaking on the ſhore:
Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
To ſhield the veſſel from the rowling ſea,
But cliffs, and ſhaggy ſhores, a dreadful ſight!
All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
Fear ſeiz'd his ſlacken'd limbs and beating heart;
As thus he commun'd with his ſoul apart.
  Ah me! when o'er a length of waters toſt,
Theſe eyes at laſt behold th' unhop'd-for coaſt,

ſenſe; and immediately afterwards he uſes it to denote a coward,

Δαιμόνι ἀτρέμας ἧσο.

This is a ſtrong evidence, that the notion of a good and bad daemon was believed in the days of Homer.

ỳ. 524. *Ah me! when o'er a length of waters toſt.*] Ulyſſes in this place calls, as it were, a council in his own breaſt; conſiders his danger, and how to free himſelf from it. But it may be aſked, if it be probable that he ſhould have leiſure for ſuch a conſultation, in the time of ſuch imminent danger? The anſwer is, that nothing could be more happily imagined, to exalt his character: he is drawn with a great preſence of mind, in the moſt deſperate circumſtances: fear does not prevail over his reaſon: his wiſdom dictates the means of

No port receives me from the angry main,
But the loud deeps demand me back again.
Above, ſharp rocks forbid acceſs; around
Roar the wild waves; beneath, is ſea profound!
No footing ſure affords the faithleſs ſand,
To ſtem too rapid, and too deep to ſtand.
If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
Daſh'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main;
Or round the iſland if my courſe I bend,
Where the ports open, or the ſhores deſcend,
Back to the ſeas the rolling ſurge may ſweep,
And bury all my hopes beneath the deep.
Or ſome enormous whale the God may ſend,
(For many ſuch on Amphitrite attend)
Too well the turns of mortal chance I know,
And hate relentleſs of my heav'nly foe.

While thus he thought, a monſt'rous wave up-bore
The chief, and daſh'd him on the craggy ſhore:
Torn was his ſkin, nor had the ribs been whole,
But inſtant Pallas enter'd in his ſoul.
Cloſe to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
And ſtuck adherent, and ſuſpended hung:

his preſervation: and his bravery of ſpirit ſupports him in the accompliſhment of it.

The poet is alſo very judicious in the management of the ſpeech: it is conciſe, and therefore proper to the occaſion, there being no leiſure for prolixity; every image is drawn from the ſituation of the place, and his preſent condition; he follows nature, and nature is the foundation of true poetry.

Till the huge ſurge roll'd off. Then backward ſweep
The refluent tides, and plunge him in the deep.
As when the Polypus from forth his cave
Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave,

ỳ. 550. *As when the Polypus.*] It is very ſurprizing to ſee the prodigious variety with which Homer enlivens his poetry: he riſes or falls as his ſubject leads him, and finds alluſions proper to repreſent an hero in battle, or a perſon in calamity. We have here an inſtance of it; he compares Ulyſſes to a Polypus; the ſimilitude is ſuited to the element, and to the condition of the perſon. It is obſervable, that this is the only full deſcription of a perſon ſhipwrecked in all his poems: he therefore gives a looſe to his imagination, and enlarges upon it very copiouſly. There appears a ſurprizing fertility of invention through the whole of it: in what a variety of attitudes is Ulyſſes drawn, during the ſtorm, and at his eſcape from it? his ſoliloquies in the turns of his condition, while he is ſometimes almoſt out of danger, and then again involved in new difficulties, engage our hopes and fears. He ennobles the whole by his machinery, and Neptune, Pallas, and Leucothea intereſt themſelves in his ſafety or deſtruction. He has likewiſe choſen the moſt proper occaſion for a copious deſcription; there is leiſure for it. The propoſition of the poem requires him to deſcribe a man of ſufferings in the perſon of Ulyſſes: he therefore no ſooner introduces him, but he throws him into the utmoſt calamities, and deſcribes them largely, to ſhew, at once, the greatneſs of his diſtreſs, and his wiſdom and patience under it. In what are the ſufferings of Æneas in Virgil comparable to theſe of Ulyſſes? Æneas ſuffers little perſonally in compariſon of Ulyſſes, his incidents have leſs variety, and conſequently leſs beauty. Homer draws his images from nature, but embelliſhes thoſe images with the utmoſt art, and fruitfulneſs of invention.

His ragged claws are ſtuck with ſtones and ſands;
So the rough rock had ſhagg'd Ulyſſes' hands.
And now had periſh'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
Th' unhappy man; ev'n fate had been in vain:
But all-ſubduing Pallas lent her pow'r,
And prudence ſav'd him in the needful hour,
Beyond the beating ſurge his courſe he bore,
(A wider circle, but in ſight of ſhore)
With longing eyes, obſerving, to ſurvey
Some ſmooth aſcent, or ſafe-ſequeſter'd bay.
Between the parting rocks at length he ſpy'd
A falling ſtream with gentler waters glide;
Where to the ſeas the ſhelving ſhore declin'd,
And form'd a bay, impervious to the wind.
To this calm port the glad Ulyſſes preſt,
And hail'd the river, and its God addreſt.
Whoe'er thou art, before whoſe ſtream unknown
I bend, a ſuppliant at thy wat'ry throne,
Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain
To thee from Neptune and the raging main.
Heav'n hears and pities helpleſs men like me,
For ſacred ev'n to Gods is miſery:

℣. 573. *For ſacred ev'n to gods is miſery.*] This expreſſion is bold, yet reconcileable to truth: heaven, in reality, has regard to the miſery and affliction of good men, and at laſt delivers them from it. *Res eſt ſacra miſer*, as Dacier obſerves; and Seneca, in his diſſertation on Providence, ſpeaks to this purpoſe, *Ecce ſpectaculum dignum ad quod reſpiciat, intentus operi ſuo, Deus! Ecce par Deo dignum, vir fortis cum mala fortuna*

Let then thy waters give the weary reſt,
And ſave a ſuppliant, and a man diſtreſt.

He pray'd, and ſtrait the gentle ſtream ſubſides,
Detains the ruſhing current of his tides,
Before the wand'rer ſmooths the wat'ry way,
And ſoft receives him from the rowling ſea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the ſhore,
He dropt his ſinewy arms: his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His ſwoln heart heav'd; his bloated body ſwell'd:

compoſitus! Miſery is not always a puniſhment, but ſometimes a trial: this is agreeable to true theology.

ỷ. 578. *Before the wand'rer ſmooths the wat'ry way.*] Such paſſages as theſe are bold, yet beautiful. Poetry animates every thing, and turns rivers into Gods. But what occaſion is there for the intervention of this River-God to ſmooth the waters, when Pallas had already compoſed both the ſeas and the ſtorms? The words in the original ſolve the objection, πρόσθε δέ οἱ ποίησε γαλήνην; or *ſmooth'd the way before him*, that is, his own current: the actions therefore are different; Pallas gives a general calmneſs to the ſea, the River-God to his own current.

ỷ. 581. *He dropp'd his ſinewy arms: his knees no more*
Perform'd their office.]

Euſtathius appears to me to give this paſſage a very forced interpretation; he imagines that the poet, by ſaying that Ulyſſes bent his knees and arms, ſpoke philoſophically, and intended to expreſs that he contracted his limbs, that had been fatigued with the long extenſion in ſwimming, by a voluntary remiſſion; leſt they ſhould grow ſtiff, and loſe their natural faculty. But this is an impoſſibility: how could this be done, when he is ſpeechleſs, fainting, without pulſe and reſpiration? Un-

From mouth and noſe the briny torrent ran;
And loſt in laſſitude lay all the man,
Depriv'd of voice, of motion, and of breath;
The ſoul ſcarce waking, in the arms of death.
Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
The mindful chief Leucothea's ſcarf unbound;
Obſervant of her word, he turn'd aſide
His head, and caſt it on the rolling tide.
Behind him far, upon the purple waves
The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.

Now parting from the ſtream, Ulyſſes found
A moſſy bank with pliant ruſhes crown'd;
The bank he preſs'd, and gently kiſs'd the ground;
Where on the flow'ry herb as ſoft he lay,
Thus to his ſoul the ſage began to ſay.

What will ye next ordain, ye Pow'rs on high!
And yet, ah yet! what fates are we to try?
Here by the ſtream, if I the night out-wear,
Thus ſpent already, how ſhall nature bear
The dews deſcending, and nocturnal air?
Or chilly vapours breathing from the flood
When morning riſes? If I take the wood,
And in thick ſhelter of innum'rous boughs
Enjoy the comfort gentle ſleep allows;

doubtedly Homer, as Dacier obſerves, means by the expreſſion of ἔκαμψε γούνατα καὶ χεῖρας, no more than that his limbs failed him, or he fainted. If the action was voluntary, it implies, that he intended to refreſh them, for γόνυ κάμπτειν is generally uſed in that ſenſe by Homer; if involuntary, if ſignifies he fainted.

Though fenc'd from cold, and though my toil be paſt,
What ſavage beaſts may wander in the waſte?
Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey
To prowling bears, or lions in their way.
  Thus long debating in himſelf he ſtood:
At length he took the paſſage to the wood,
Whoſe ſhady horrors on a riſing brow
Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the ſtream below.
There grew two olives, cloſeſt of the grove,
With roots intwin'd, and branches interwove;
Alike their leaves, but not alike they ſmil'd
With ſiſter-fruits; one fertile, one was wild.
Nor here the ſun's meridian rays had pow'r,
Nor wind ſharp-piercing, nor the ruſhing ſhow'r;
The verdant arch ſo cloſe its texture kept:
Beneath this covert, great Ulyſſes crept.
Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made,
(Thick ſtrown by tempeſt through the bow'ry ſhade)
Where three at leaſt might winter's cold defy,
Though Boreas rag'd along th' inclement ſky.
This ſtore, with joy the patient hero found,
And ſunk amidſt them, heap'd the leaves around.
As ſome poor peaſant, fated to reſide
Remote from neighbours in a foreſt wide,

℣. 630. *As ſome poor peaſant, fated to reſide*
Remote from neighbours.]
Homer is very happy in giving dignity to low images. What can be more unpromiſing than this compariſon, and what more ſucceſsfully executed? Ulyſſes, in whom

Studious to ſave what human wants require,
In embers heap'd, preſerves the ſeeds of fire:
Hid in dry foliage thus Ulyſſes lies,
Till Pallas pour'd ſoft ſlumbers on his eyes;
And golden dreams (the gift of ſweet repoſe)
Lull'd all his cares, and baniſh'd all his woes.

remains, as it were, but a ſpark of liſe, the vital heat being extinguiſhed by the ſhipwreck, is very juſtly compared to a brand, that retains only ſome ſmall remains of fire; the leaves that cover Ulyſſes, are repreſented by the embers, and the preſervation of the fire all night, paints the revival of his ſpirits by the repoſe of the night; the expreſſion,

——— *Fated to reſide*
Remote from neighbours,

is not added in vain; it gives, as Euſtathius further obſerves, an air of credibility to the alluſion, as if it had really been drawn from ſome particular obſervation; a perſon that lives in a deſart being obliged to ſuch circumſtantial cares, where it is impoſſible to have a ſupply, for want of neighbours. Homer literally calls theſe remains *the ſeeds of fire;* Æſchylus in his Prometheus calls a ſpark of fire πυρὸς πηγὴν, or *a fountain of fire;* leſs happily in my judgment, the ideas of fire and water being contradictory.

The concluſion.] This book begins with the ſeventh day, and comprehends the ſpace of twenty-five days; the firſt of which is taken up in the meſſage of Mercury, and interview between Calypſo and Ulyſſes; the four following in the building of the veſſel; eighteen before the ſtorm, and two after it. So that one and thirty days are compleated, ſince the opening of the poem.

THE
ODYSSEY.
BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Pallas appearing in a dream to Nausicaa, (the daughter of Alcinous king of Phaeacia) commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of state, in preparation to her nuptials. Nausicaa goes with her handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their voices awake Ulysses, who, addressing himself to the princess, is by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the king and queen of the island.

WHILE thus the weary wand'rer sunk to rest,
And peaceful slumbers calm'd his anxious breast;
The martial maid from heav'n's aerial height
Swift to Phaeacia wing'd her rapid flight.
In elder times the soft Phaeacian train
In ease possess'd the wide Hyperian plain;
Till the Cyclopean race in arms arose,
A lawless nation of gygantic foes:
Then great Nausithous from Hypereia
Through seas retreating from the sound of war,

The recreant nation to fair Scheria led,

Where never ſcience rear'd her laurel'd head:

ỳ. 12. *Where never ſcience rear'd her laurel'd head.*] The Phaeacians having a great ſhare in the ſucceeding parts of the Odyſſey, it may not be improper to enlarge upon their character. Homer has here deſcribed them very diſtinctly: he is to make uſe of the Phaeacians to convey Ulyſſes to his country; he therefore, by this ſhort character, gives the reader ſuch an image of them, that he is not ſurpriz'd at their credulity and ſimplicity, in believing all thoſe fabulous recitals which Ulyſſes makes in the progreſs of the poem. The place likewiſe in which he deſcribes them is well choſen: it is before they enter upon action, and by this method we know what to expect from them, and ſee how every action is naturally ſuited to their character.

Boſſu obſerves that the poet has inſerted this verſe with great judgment: Ulyſſes, ſays he, knew that the Phaeacians were ſimple and credulous; and that they had all the qualities of a lazy people, who admire nothing ſo much as romantic adventures: he therefore pleaſes them by recitals ſuited to their own humour: but even here the poet is not unmindful of his more underſtanding readers, and the truth intended to be taught by way of moral is, that a ſoft and effeminate life breaks the ſpirit, and renders it incapable of manly ſentiments or actions.

Plutarch ſeems to underſtand this verſe in a different manner; he quotes it in his diſſertation upon baniſhment, to ſhew that Nauſithous made his people happy, though he left his own country, and ſettled them far from the commerce of mankind, ἐκὰς ἀνδρῶν ἀλφηστάων, without any particular view to the Phaeacians, which was undoubtedly intended by Homer; thoſe words being a kind of a preface to their general character.

This Phaeacia of the antients is the iſland now call-

There round his tribes a ſtrength of wall he rais'd,
To heav'n the glitt'ring domes and temples blaz'd;
Juſt to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds,
And ſhar'd the lands, and gave the lands their bounds.
Now in the ſilent grave the monarch lay,
And wiſe Alcinous held the regal ſway.

To his high palace through the fields of air
The goddeſs ſhot; Ulyſſes was her care.
There as the night in ſilence roll'd away,
A heav'n of charms divine Nauſicaa lay:
Through the thick gloom the ſhining portals blaze;
Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.

ed Corfu. The inhabitants of it were a colony of the Hyperians: Euſtathius remarks, that it has been a queſtion whether Hyperia were a city or an iſland; he judges it to be a city: it was infeſted by the Cyclops; but they had no ſhipping, as appears from the tenth of the Odyſſey, and conſequently if it had been an iſland, they could not have moleſted the Phaeacians; he therefore concludes it to be a city, afterwards called Camarina in Sicily.

Mr. Barnes has here added a verſe that is not to be found in any other edition; and I have rendered it in the tranſlation.

ỷ. 24. *Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.*] The poet, as Euſtathius obſerves, celebrates the beauty of theſe two attending virgins to raiſe their characters, that they may not be eſteemed common ſervants, or the poet thought extravagant when he compares Nauſicaa and her damſels to Diana and her nymphs.

The judgment with which he introduces the viſion is remarkable: in the Iliad, when he is to give an air

Light as the viewleſs air, the warrior maid
Glides through the valves, and hovers round her head;
A fav'rite virgin's blooming form ſhe took,
From Dymas ſprung, and thus the viſion ſpoke:
 Oh indolent! to waſte thy hours away!
And ſleep'ſt thou, careleſs of the bridal day?
Thy ſpouſal ornament neglected lies;
Ariſe, prepare the bridal train, ariſe.

of importance to his viſion, he clothes it in the likeneſs of Neſtor, the wiſeſt perſon of the army; a man of leſs conſideration had been unſuitable to the greatneſs of the occaſion, which was to perſuade kings and heroes. Here the poet ſends a viſion to a young lady, under the reſemblance of a young lady: he adapts the circumſtances to the perſon, and deſcribes the whole with an agreeable propriety. Euſtathius.

℣. 31. *The ſpouſal ornament neglected lies:*
Ariſe, prepare the bridal train.]
Here is a remarkable cuſtom of antiquity. Euſtathius obſerves, that it was uſual for the bride to give changes of dreſs to the friends of the bridegroom at the celebration of the marriage, and Homer directly affirms it. Dacier quotes a paſſage in Judges concerning Sampſon's giving changes of garments at his marriage feaſt, as an inſtance of the like cuſtom among the Iſraelites; but I believe, if there was ſuch a cuſtom at all amongſt them, it is not evident from the paſſage alleged: nothing is plainer, than that Sampſon had not given the garments, if his riddle had not been expounded: nay, inſtead of giving, he himſelf had received them, if it had not been interpreted. I am rather of opinion that what is ſaid of Sampſon, has relation to another cuſtom amongſt the ancients, of propoſing an ænigma at feſtivals, and adjudging a reward to him that ſolved it. Theſe the

A juſt applauſe the cares of dreſs impart,
And give ſoft tranſport to a parent's heart.

Greeks called γρίφυς συμποτικὺς; *griphos convivales;* Athenaeus has a long diſſertation about this practice in his tenth book, and gives a number of inſtances of the ænigmatical propoſitions in uſe at Athens, and of the foreſeitures and rewards upon the ſolution, and non-ſolution of them; and Euſtathius, in the tenth book of the Odyſſey, comes into the ſame opinion. So that if it was a cuſtom amongſt the Iſraelites, as well as Greeks, to give garments, (as it appears to be to give other gifts) this paſſage is no inſtance of it: it is indeed a proof that the Hebrews, as well as Greeks, had a cuſtom of entertaining themſelves at their feſtivals, with theſe *griphi convivales:* I therefore believe that theſe changes of garments were to more than rewards or forfeits, according to the ſucceſs in the interpretation.

ÿ. 33. *A juſt applauſe the cares of dreſs impart.*] It is very probable that Quintilian had this verſe in his view when he wrote *Cultus magnificus addit hominibus, ut Graeco verſu teſtatum eſt, auctoritatem.* His words are almoſt a tranſlation of it.

> Ἐκ γάρ τοι τύτων φάτις ἀνθρώπυς ἀναβαίνει,
> Ἐσθλή.

What I would chiefly obſerve is the propriety with which this commendation of dreſs is introduced; it is put into the mouth of a young lady (for ſo Pallas appears to be) to whoſe character it is ſuitable to delight in ornament. It likewiſe agrees very well with the deſcription of the Phaeacians, whoſe chief happineſs conſiſted in dancing, dreſſing, ſinging, *etc.* Such a commendation of ornament would have been improper in the mouth of a philoſopher, but beautiful when ſpoken by a young lady to Alcinous.

Haſte, to the limpid ſtream direct thy way,
When the gay morn unveils her ſmiling ray:
Haſte to the ſtream! companion of thy care
Lo I thy ſteps attend, thy labours ſhare.
Virgin, awake! the marriage hour is nigh,
See! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs ſigh!

ỳ. 35. *Haſte, to the limpid ſtream.*] This paſſage has not eſcaped the raillery of the critics; Homer, ſay they, brings the goddeſs of wiſdom down from heaven, only to adviſe Nauſicaa to make haſte to waſh her cloths againſt her wedding: what neceſſity is there for a conduct ſo extraordinary upon ſo trivial an occaſion? Euſtathius ſufficiently anſwers the objection, by obſerving that the poet very naturally brings about the ſafety of Ulyſſes by it; the action of the waſhing is the means, the protection of Ulyſſes the end of the deſcent of that goddeſs; ſo that ſhe is not introduced lightly, or without contributing to an important action: and it muſt be allowed, that the means made uſe of are very natural; they grow out of the occaſion, and at once give the fable a poetical turn, and an air of probability.

It has been further objected, that the poet gives an unworthy employment to Nauſicaa, the daughter of a king; but ſuch critics form their idea of antient, from modern greatneſs: it would be now a meanneſs to deſcribe a perſon of quality thus employed, becauſe cuſtom has made it the work of perſons of low condition: it would be now thought diſhonourable for a lady of high ſtation to attend the flocks; yet we find, in the moſt antient hiſtory extant, that the daughters of Laban and Jethro, perſons of power and diſtinction, were ſo employed, without any diſhonour to their quality. In ſhort, theſe paſſages are to be looked upon as exact pictures of the old world, and conſequently as valuable remains of antiquity.

The royal car at early dawn obtain,
And order mules obedient to the rein;
For rough the way, and diſtant rolls the wave
Where their fair veſts Phaeacian virgins lave.
In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the great,
And majeſty derives a grace from ſtate.
  Then to the palaces of heav'n ſhe ſails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales:

℣. 41. *The royal car obtain.*] It would have been an impropriety to have rendered ἅμαξαν by the word *chariot;* Homer ſeems induſtriouſly to avoid ἅρμα, but conſtantly uſes ἀπήνη, or ἅμαξα; this car was drawn by mules; whereas, obſerves Euſtathius, the chariot or ἅρμα was proper only for horſes. The word *car* takes in the idea of any other vehicle, as well as of a chariot.

This paſſage has undergone a very ſevere cenſure, as mean and ridiculous, chiefly from the expreſſions to her father afterwards, ὑψηλὴν, εὔκυκλον: which being rendered *high, and round,* diſgrace the author: no perſon, I believe, would aſk a father to lend his high and round car; nor has Homer ſaid it: Euſtathius obſerves, that εὔκυκλος is the ſame as εὔτροχος κύκλα λέγονται οἱ τροχοὶ, or wheels; and that ὑπερτερία, is τὸ ἐπικείμενον τετράγωνον πλινθίον τῷ ἄξονι, or the quadrangular body of the car that reſts upon the axle of it; this fully anſwers the criticiſm: Nauſicaa deſcribes the car ſo particularly, to diſtinguiſh it from a chariot, which had been improper for her purpoſe: the other part of the objection, concerning the roundneſs of the car, is a miſtake in the critic; the word having relation to the wheels, and not to the body of it, which, as Euſtathius obſerves, was quadrangular.

℣. 47. *Then to the palaces of heav'n ſhe ſails.*] Lu-

The ſeat of Gods, the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of eaſe.
There no rude winds preſume to ſhake the ſkies,
No rains deſcend, no ſnowy vapours riſe;
But on immortal thrones the bleſt repoſe:
The firmament with living ſplendors glows.
Hither the goddeſs wing'd th' aerial way,
Through heav'n's eternal gates that blaz'd with day.

Now from her roſy car Aurora ſhed
The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red.
Up roſe the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the viſion of the night.
The queen ſhe ſought: the queen her hours beſtow'd
In curious works; the whirling ſpindle glow'd

cretius has copied this fine paſſage, and equalled, if not ſurpaſſed the original.

Apparet Divum numen, ſedeſque quietae,
Quas neque concutiunt venti, neque nubila nimbis
Aſpergunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina
Cana cadens violat: ſemperque innubilus aether
Integit, et large diffuſo lumine ridet.

The picture is the ſame in both authors, but the colouring, in my opinion, is leſs beautiful in Homer than Lucretius: the three laſt lines in particular are fuller of ornament, and the very verſes have an air of the ſerenity they were intended to paint.

℣. 61. ——— *The queen her hours beſtow'd*
In curious works.———]
This is another image of antient life: we ſee a queen amidſt her attendants at work at the dawn of day: *de nocte ſurrexit, et digiti ejus apprehenderant fuſum.*

With crimſon threads, while buſy damſels cull
The ſnowy fleece, or twiſt the purpled wool.
Mean-while Phaeacia's peers in council ſate;
From his high dome the king deſcends in ſtate,
Then with a filial awe the royal maid
Approach'd him paſſing, and ſubmiſſive ſaid;
Will my dread ſire his ear regardful deign,
And may his child the royal car obtain?
Say, with thy garments ſhall I bend my way
Where through the vales the mazy waters ſtray?
A dignity of dreſs adorns the great,
And kings draw luſtre from the robe of ſtate.
Five ſons thou haſt; three wait the bridal day,
And ſpotleſs robes become the young and gay:
So when with praiſe amid the dance they ſhine,
By theſe my cares adorn'd, that praiſe is mine.
Thus ſhe: but bluſhes ill reſtrain'd betray
Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day:
The conſcious ſire the dawning bluſh ſurvey'd,
And ſmiling thus beſpoke the blooming maid.
My child, my darling joy, the car receive;
That, and whate'er our daughter aſks, we give.
Swift at the royal nod th' attending train
The car prepare, the mules inceſſant rein.

* This is a practice as contrary to the manners of our ages, as the other of waſhing the robes: it is the more remarkable in this queen, becauſe ſhe lived amongſt an idle effeminate people, that loved nothing but pleaſures. Dacier.

The blooming virgin, with diſpatchful cares,
Tunics, and ſtoles, and robes imperial bears.
The queen, aſſiduous, to her train aſſigns
The ſumptuous viands, and the flav'rous wines.
The train prepare a cruiſe of curious mold,
A cruiſe of fragrance, form'd of burniſh'd gold;
Odour divine! whoſe ſoft refreſhing ſtreams
Sleek the ſmooth ſkin, and ſcent the ſnowy limbs.
Now mounting the gay ſeat, the ſilken reins
Shine in her hand: along the ſounding plains

ỳ. 88. *Tunics, and ſtoles, and robes imperial bears.*] It is not without reaſon that the poet deſcribes Nauſicaa carrying the whole wardrobe of the family to the river: he inſerts theſe circumſtances ſo particularly, that ſhe may be able to clothe Ulyſſes in the ſequel of the ſtory: he further obſerves the modeſty and ſimplicity of thoſe early times, when the whole dreſs of a king and his family (who reigned over a people that delighted in dreſs) is without gold: for we ſee Nauſicaa carries with her all the habits that were uſed at the greateſt ſolemnities; which had they been wrought with gold could not have been waſhed. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 95. *Now mounting the gay ſeat*, etc.] This image of Nauſicaa riding in her car to the river, has exerciſed the pencils of excellent painters. Pauſanias in his fifth book, which is the firſt of the Eliacs, ſpeaks of a picture of two virgins drawn by mules, of which the one guides the reins, the other has her head covered with a veil: it is believed that it repreſents Nauſicaa, the daughter of Alcinous, going with one of her virgins to the river. The words of Pauſanias have cauſed ſome doubt with relation to the picture; he ſays, ἐπὶ ἡμιόνων, or *upon mules*, but Homer deſcribes her upon a car; how then can Nauſicaa be intended by the painter?

Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone,
Around, a beavy of bright damſels ſhone.
They ſeek the ciſterns where Phaeacian dames
Waſh their fair garments in the limpid ſtreams;
Where gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a ſpacious baſon fills.

But Romulus Amaſæus, who comments upon Pauſanias, ſolves the difficulty, by obſerving that ἐπὶ ἡμιόνων does not ſignify *upon mules*, but a *car drawn by mules*, by a figure frequent in all authors. Pliny is alſo thus to be underſtood in his 35th book; Protogenes, the Rhodian, painted at Athens, Paralus, and likewiſe Hemionida, who is ſaid to repreſent Nauſicaa; Hemionida is uſed (as Hermolaus Barbarus obſerves upon that paſſage) as a term of art to expreſs a virgin riding upon, or more properly drawn by mules, or ἐπὶ ἡμιόνων. Spondanus.

ỳ. 101. *Where gathering into depth from falling rills,*
The lucid wave a ſpacious baſon fills.]

It is evident, that the antients had baſons, or ciſterns, continually ſupplied by the rivers for this buſineſs of waſhing; they were called, obſerves Euſtathius, πλυνοὶ or βόθροι; and were ſometimes made of marble, other times of wood. Thus in the Iliad, book 22d,

Each guſhing fount a marble ciſtern fills,
Whoſe poliſh'd bed receives the falling rills,
Where Trojan dames, ere yet alarm'd by Greece,
Waſh'd their fair garments in the days of peace.

The manner of waſhing was different from what is now in uſe: they trod them with their feet, Στεῖβον, ἔτριβον τοῖς ποσί. Euſtathius.

It may be thought that theſe cuſtoms are of ſmall importance, and of little concern to the preſent ages: it is true; but time has ſtamped a value upon them: like antient medals, their intrinſic worth may be ſmall, but yet they are valuable, becauſe images of antiquity.

The mules unharneſs'd range beſide the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.
  Then æmulous the royal robes they lave,
And plunge the veſtures in the cleanſing wave:
(The veſtures cleans'd o'erſpread the ſheily ſand,
Their ſnowy luſtre whitens all the ſtrand:)
Then with a ſhort repaſt relieve their toil,
And o'er their limbs diffuſe ambroſial oil:
And while the robes imbibe the ſolar ray,
O'er the green mead the ſporting virgins play:
(Their ſhining veils unbound.) Along the ſkies
Toſt, and retoſt, the ball inceſſant flies.

Plutarch, in his Sympoſiacs, propoſes this queſtion, Why Nauſicaa waſhes in the river, rather than the ſea, though it was more nigh, more hot, and conſequently more fit for the purpoſe than the river? Theon anſwers from Ariſtotle, that the ſea-water has many groſs, rough, and earthy particles in it, as appears from its ſaltneſs, whereas freſh water is more pure and unmixt, and conſequently more ſubtle and penetrating, and fitter for uſe in waſhing. Themiſtocles diſlikes this reaſon, and affirms the ſea-water, being more rough and earthy than that of rivers, is therefore the moſt proper, for its cleanſing quality; this appears from obſervation; for in waſhing, aſhes, or ſome ſuch ſubſtance, are thrown into the freſh water to make it effectual, for thoſe particles open the pores, and conduce to the effect of cleanſing. The true reaſon then is, that there is an unctuous nature in ſea-water, (and Ariſtotle confeſſes all ſalt to be unctuous) which hinders it from cleanſing: whereas river-water is pure, leſs mixt, and conſequently more ſubtle and penetrating, and being free from all oily ſubſtance, is preferable and more effectual than ſea-water.

They ſport, they feaſt; Nauſicaa lifts her voice,
And warbling ſweet, makes earth and heav'n rejoice.
As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves,
Or wide Taygetus's reſounding groves;

ỳ. 117. *As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves.*] This is a very beautiful compariſon, (and whenever I ſay any thing in commendation of Homer, I would always be underſtood to mean the original.) Virgil was ſenſible of it, and inſerted it in his poem.

Qualis in Eurotae ripis, aut per juga Cynthi
Exercet Diana choros; quam mille ſecutae
Hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades: illa pharetram
Fert humero, gradienſque deas ſupereminet omnes:
Latonae tacitum pertentant gaudia pectus.

It has given occaſion for various criticiſms, with relation to the beauty of the two authors. I will lay before the reader what is ſaid in behalf of Homer in Aulus Gellius, and the anſwer by Scaliger.

Gellius writes, that it was the opinion of Valerius Probus, that no paſſage has been more unhappily copied by Virgil, than this compariſon. Homer very beautifully compares Nauſicaa, a virgin, ſporting with her damſels in a ſolitary place, to Diana, a virgin goddeſs, taking her diverſion in a foreſt, in hunting with her rural nymphs. Whereas Dido, a widow, is drawn by Virgil in the midſt of a city, walking gravely with the Tyrian princes, *inſtans operi, regniſque futuris*, a circumſtance that bears not the leaſt reſemblance to the ſports of the goddeſs. Homer repreſents Diana with her quiver at her ſhoulder, but, at the ſame time, he deſcribes her as an huntreſs: Virgil gives her a quiver, but mentions nothing of her as an huntreſs, and conſequently lays a needleſs burden upon her ſhoulder. Homer excellently paints the fulneſs of joy which Latona felt at the ſight of her daughter, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ;

A ſylvan train the huntreſs queen ſurrounds,
Her rattling quiver from her ſhoulder ſounds:
Fierce in the ſport, along the mountain brow
They bay the boar, or chaſe the bounding roe;
High o'er the lawn, with more majeſtic pace,
Above the nymphs ſhe treads with ſtately grace;
Diſtinguiſh'd excellence the goddeſs proves;
Exults Latona as the virgin moves.

Virgil falls infinitely ſhort of it in the word *pertentant*, which ſignifies a light joy that ſinks not deep into the heart. Laſtly, Virgil has omitted the ſtrongeſt point and very flower of the compariſon,

Ῥεῖα δ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι,

It is the laſt circumſtance that completes the compariſon, as it diſtinguiſhes Nanſicaa from her attendants, for which very purpoſe the alluſion was introduced.

Scaliger, who never deſerts Virgil in any difficulty, anſwers, that the perſons, not the places, are intended to be repreſented by both poets; otherwiſe Homer himſelf is blameable, for Nauſicaa is not ſporting on a mountain but a plain, and has neither bow nor quiver like Diana. Neither is there any weight in the objection concerning the gravity of the gait of Dido; for neither is Nauſicaa deſcribed in the act of hunting, but dancing: and as for the word *pertentant*, it is a metaphor taken from muſicians and muſical inſtruments: it denotes a ſtrong degree of joy, *per* bears an intenſive ſenſe, and takes in the perfection of joy. As to the quiver, it was an enſign of the goddeſs, as Ἀργυρότοξος was of Apollo, and is applied to her upon all occaſions indifferently, not only by Virgil, but more frequently by Homer. Laſtly, ῥεῖα δ' ἀριγνώτη, etc. is ſuperfluous, for the joy of Latona completes the whole, and Homer has already ſaid, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ.

When equal grace Nausicaa trod the plain,
And shone transcendent o'er the beauteous train.
Mean time (the care and fav'rite of the skies)
Wrapt in embow'ring shade Ulysses lies,
His woes forgot! But Pallas now addrest
To break the bands of all-composing rest.
Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw
The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,

But still it must be allowed, that there is a greater correspondence to the subject intended to be illustrated, in Homer than in Virgil. Diana sports, so does Nausicaa; Diana is a virgin, so is Nausicaa; Diana is amongst her virgin nymphs, Nausicaa among her virgin attendants; whereas in all these points there is the greatest dissimilitude between Dido and Diana: and no one I believe but Scaliger can think the verse above quoted superfluous, which indeed is the beauty and perfection of the comparison. There may, perhaps, be a more rational objection made against this line in both poets.

Latonae tacitum pertentant gaudia pectus.

This verse has no relation to the principal subject, the expectation is fully satisfied without it, and it alludes to nothing that either precedes or follows it, and consequently may be judged superfluous.

℣. 133. *Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw*
The various ball.———]
This play with the ball was called φεννίς, and ἐφετίνδα, by the ancients; and from the signification of the word, which is *deception*, we may learn the nature of the play: the ball was thrown to some one of the players unexpectedly, and he as unexpectedly threw it to some other of the company to catch, from which surprize upon one another, it took the name of φεννίς. It was a

And ſwam the ſtream: Loud ſhrieks the virgin train,
And the loud ſhriek redoubles from the main. 136

ſport much in uſe amongſt the ancients, both men and women; it cauſed a variety of motions in throwing and running, and was therefore a very healthful exerciſe. The Lacedaemonians were remarkable for the uſe of it; Alexander the great frequently exerciſed at it; and Sophocles wrote a play, called Πλυντρίας, or *Lotrices;* in which he repreſented Nauſicaa ſporting with her damſels at this play: it is not now extant.

Dionyſidorus gives us a various reading, inſtead of σφαῖραν ἔπειτ' ἔῤῥιψε, he writes it, πάλλαν ἔπειτ', which the Latins render πῖλον; and Suidas countenances the alteration; for he writes that a damſel, named Lariſſa, as ſhe ſported at this play, (πίλῳ, not σφαίρῃ) was drowned in the river Peneus. Euſtathius.

What I would further obſerve is, the art of the poet in carrying on the ſtory: he proceeds from incident to incident very naturally, and makes the ſports of theſe virgins contribute to the principal deſign of the poem, and promote the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes, by diſcovering him advantageouſly to the Phaeacians. He ſo judiciouſly interweaves theſe ſports into the texture of the ſtory, that there would be a chaſm if they were taken away; and the ſports of the virgins are as much of a piece with the whole, as any of the labours of Ulyſſes.

The poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct: it beautifies and enlivens the poem with a pleaſant and entertaining ſcene, and relieves the reader's mind by taking it off from a continual repreſentation of horror and ſufferings in the ſtory of Ulyſſes: he himſelf ſeems here to take breath, and indulging his fancy, lets it run out into ſeveral beautiful compariſons, to prepare the reader to hear, with a better reliſh, the long detail of the calamities of his hero, through the ſequel of the Odyſſey.

Wak'd by the ſhrilling ſound, Ulyſſes roſe,
And to the deaf woods wailing, breath'd his woes.

Ah me! on what inhoſpitable coaſt,
On what new region is Ulyſſes toſt?
Poſſeſt by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whoſe boſom tender pity warms?
What ſounds are theſe that gather from the ſhores?
The voice of nymphs that haunt the ſylvan bow'rs?
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the ſhady wood,
Or azure daughters of the ſilver flood?

℣. 139. *Ah me! on what inhoſpitable coaſt.*] This ſoliloquy is well adapted to the circumſtances of Ulyſſes, and ſhort, as is requiſite in all ſoliloquies.

Virgil has imitated it, and Scaliger in general prefers the copy to the original.

> *Ut primum lux alma data eſt, exire, locoſque*
> *Explorare novos, quas vento acceſſerit oras:*
> *Qui teneant (nam inculta videt) hominesne, feraene,*
> *Quaerere conſtituit* ———

But it may perhaps be true, that Virgil here falls ſhort of Homer: there is not that harmony of numbers, that variety of circumſtances, and ſentiments in the Latin, as appears in the Greek poet; and above all, the whole paſſage has more force and energy by being put into the mouth of Ulyſſes, than when merely related by Virgil.

Dacier obſerves, that Abraham makes the very ſame reflections as Ulyſſes, upon his arrival at Gerar. *Cogitavi mecum dicens, forſitan non eſt timor Domini in loco iſto.* Gen. xx. 11. *I thought, ſurely the fear of God is not in this place;* which very well anſwers to καὶ σφιν νόος ἐςὶ θεεδής.

Or human voice? but iſſuing from the ſhades
Why ceaſe I ſtrait to learn what ſound invades?

Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends,
With forceful ſtrength a branch the hero rends;
Around his loins the verdant cincture ſpreads
A wreathy foliage, and concealing ſhades.

ỳ. 151. *Around his loins the verdant cincture ſpreads*
A wreathy foliage and concealing ſhades.] This paſſage has given great offence to the critics. The interview between Ulyſſes and Nauſicaa, ſays Rapin, outrages all the rules of decency: ſhe forgets her modeſty, and betrays her virtue, by giving too long an audience: ſhe yields too much to his complaints, and indulges her curioſity too far at the ſight of a perſon in ſuch circumſtances. But perhaps Rapin is too ſevere; Homer has guarded every circumſtance with as much caution as if he had been aware of the objection: he covers his loins with a broad foliage, for Euſtathius obſerves, that πτόρθος ſignifies κλάδος πλατύς, or *a broad branch*; he makes Ulyſſes ſpeak at a proper diſtance, and introduces Minerva to encourage her virgin modeſty. Is there here any outrage of decency? Beſides, what takes off this objection of immodeſty in Nauſicaa, is, that the ſight of a naked man was not unuſual in thoſe ages; it was cuſtomary for virgins of the higheſt quality to attend heroes to the bath, and even to aſſiſt in bathing them, without any breach of modeſty; as is evident from the conduct of Polycaſte in the concluſion of the third book of the Odyſſey, who bathes and perfumes Telemachus. If this be true, the other objections of Rapin about her yielding too much to his complaints, etc. are of no weight; but ſo many teſtimonies of her virtuous and compaſſionate diſpoſition, which induces her to pity and relieve calamity. Yet it may ſeem that the other damſels had a different opinion of

As when a lion in the midnight hours
Beat by rude blasts, and wet with wat'ry show'rs,

this interview, and that through modesty they ran away, while Nausicaa alone talks with Ulysses: but this only shews, not that she had less modesty, but more prudence, than her retinue. The damsels fled not out of modesty, but fear of an enemy: whereas Nausicaa wisely reflects that no such person could arrive there, the country being an island; and from his appearance, she rightly concluded him to be a man in calamity. This Wisdom is the Pallas in the allegory, which makes her to stay when the other damsels fly for want of equal reflection. Adam and Eve covered themselves after the same manner as Ulysses.

℣. 153. *As when a lion in the midnight hours.*] This is a very noble comparison, yet has not escaped censure: it has been objected, that it is improper for the occasion, as bearing images of too much terror, only to fright a few timorous virgins, and that the poet is unseasonably sublime. This is only true in burlesque poetry, where the most noble images are frequently assembled to disgrace the subject, and to shew a ridiculous disproportion between the allusion and the principal subject; but the same reason will not hold in epic poetry, where the poet raises a low circumstance into dignity by a sublime comparison. The simile is not introduced merely to shew the impression it made upon the virgins, but paints Ulysses himself in very strong colours: Ulysses is fatigued with the tempests and waves; the lion with winds and storms; it is hunger that drives the lion upon his prey; an equal necessity compells Ulysses to go down to the virgins: the lion is described in all his terrors, Ulysses arms himself as going upon an unknown adventure; so that the comparison is very noble and very proper. This verse in particular has something horrible in the very run of it.

Deſcends terrific from the mountain's brow,
With living flames his rowling eye-balls glow;
With conſcious ſtrength elate, he bends his way
Majeſtically fierce, to ſeize his prey;
(The ſteer or ſtag:) or with keen hunger bold
Springs o'er the fence, and diſſipates the fold.
No leſs a terror, from the neighb'ring groves
Rough from the toſſing ſurge Ulyſſes moves;
Urg'd on by want, and recent from the ſtorms;
The brackiſh ooze his manly grace deforms.
Wide o'er the ſhore with many a piercing cry
To rocks, to caves, the frighted virgins fly:
All but the nymph: the nymph ſtood fix'd alone,
By Pallas arm'd with boldneſs not her own.
Mean-time in dubious thought the king awaits,
And ſelf-conſidering, as he ſtands, debates;

Σμερδαλέος δ' αὐτῇσι φάνη κεκακωμένος ἅλμῃ.

Dionyſius Halicarn. in his obſervations upon the placing of words, quotes it to this purpoſe: when Homer, ſays he, is to introduce a terrible or unuſual image, he rejects the more flowing and harmonious vowels, and makes choice of ſuch mutes and conſonants as load the ſyllables, and render the pronunciation difficult.

Pauſanias writes in his Attics, that the famous painter Polygnotus painted this ſubject in the gallery at Athens. Ἔγραψε δὲ καὶ πρὸς τῷ ποταμῷ ταῖς ὁμοῦ πλυνούσαις ἐφιστάμενον Ὀδύσσεα; he painted Ulyſſes approaching Nauſicaa and her damſels, as they were waſhing at the river. This is the ſame Polygnotus who painted in the gallery called ποικίλη, the battle of Marathon gained by Miltiades over the Medes and Perſians.

Diſtant his mournful ſtory to declare,
Or proſtrate at her knee addreſs the pray'r.
But fearful to offend, by wiſdom ſway'd,
At awful diſtance he accoſts the maid.
If from the ſkies a goddeſs, or if earth
(Imperial virgin) boaſt thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend; if in that bright diſguiſe
Thou viſit earth, a daughter of the ſkies,

ỳ. 175. *If from the ſkies a goddeſs, or if earth*
(Imperial virgin) boaſt thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend!]

There never was a more agreeable and inſinuating piece of flattery, than this addreſs of Ulyſſes; and yet nothing mean appears in it, as is uſual in almoſt all flattery. The only part that ſeems liable to any imputation, is that exaggeration at the beginning, of calling her a goddeſs; yet this is propoſed with modeſty and doubt, and hypothetically. Euſtathius aſſigns two reaſons why he reſembles her to Diana, rather than to any other deity; either becauſe he found her and her damſels in a ſolitary place, ſuch as Diana is ſuppoſed to frequent with her rural nymphs; or perhaps Ulyſſes might have ſeen ſome ſtatue or picture of that goddeſs, to which Nauſicaa bore a likeneſs. Virgil, who has imitated this paſſage, is more bold; when, without any doubt or heſitation, before he knew Venus, he pronounces the perſon with whom he talks, *O dea, certe.*

Ovid has copied this paſſage in his Metamorphoſis, book the fourth.

——— puer o digniſſime credi
Eſſe Deus; ſeu tu Deus es; potes eſſe Cupido:
Sive es mortalis; qui te genuere beati!
Et frater felix, et quae dedit ubera nutrix!

Hail, Dian, hail! the huntreſs of the groves
So ſhines majeſtic, and ſo ſtately moves,

Sed longe cunctis longeque potentior illa
Si qua tibi ſponſa eſt, ſi quam dignabere taeda!

Scaliger prefers Virgil's imitation to Homer;

O, quam te memorem, virgo! namque haud tibi vultus
Mortalis, nec vox hominem ſonat. O dea, certe!
An Phoebi ſoror, an nympharum ſanguinis una?

See his reaſons in the fifth book of his Poetics. But Scaliger brings a much heavier charge againſt Homer, as having ſtolen the verſes from Muſaeus, and diſgraced them by his alterations. The verſes are as follow.

Κύπρι φίλη μετὰ κύπριν, Ἀθηναίη μετ᾽ Ἀθηνήν,
Οὐ γάρ ἐπιχθονίῃσιν ἴσην καλέω σε γυναιξίν.
Ἀλλά σε θυγατέρεσσι Διὸς Κρονιῶνος ἐΐσκω,
Ὄλβιος ὃς σ᾽ ἐφύτευσε, καὶ ὀλβίη ἣ τέκε μήτηρ,
Γαστὴρ, ἥ σ᾽ ἐλόχευσε, μακαρτάτη.

Scaliger imagines this Muſaeus to be the ſame mentioned by Virgil in the Elyſian fields,

Muſaeum ante omnes, etc.

But I believe it is now agreed, that all the works of the antient Muſaeus are periſhed; and that the perſon who wrote theſe verſes lived many centuries after Homer, and conſequently borrowed them from him. Scaliger calls them fine and lively in Muſaeus, but abject, unnervate, and unharmonious in Homer. But his prejudice againſt Homer is too apt to give a wrong biaſs to his judgment. Is the ſimilitude of ſound in σιν ἴσην in the ſecond verſe of Muſaeus, harmonious? and is there not a tautology in the two laſt lines? *Happy is the mother that bore thee, and moſt happy the womb that brought thee forth;* as if the happy perſon in the former line were not the ſame with the moſt happy in the lat-

So breathes an air divine! But if thy race
Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,
Bleſt is the father from whoſe loins you ſprung,
Bleſt is the mother at whoſe breaſt you hung,
Bleſt are the brethren who thy blood divide,
To ſuch a miracle of charms ally'd:
Joyful they ſee applauding princes gaze,
When ſtately in the dance you ſwim th' harmonious maze.
But bleſt o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
Who claſps the bright perfection in his arms!
Never, I never view'd till this bleſt hour
Such finiſh'd grace! I gaze and I adore!
Thus ſeems the palm with ſtately honours crown'd
By Phoebus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;

ter! Whereas Homer ſtill riſes in his images, and ends with a compliment very agreeable to a beautiful woman.

But bleſt o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
Who claſps the bright perfection in his arms!

But this is ſubmitted to the reader's better judgment.

℣. 187. *Joyful they ſee applauding princes gaze.*] In the original there is a falſe conſtruction, for after σφίσι θυμὸς ἰαίνεται, Ulyſſes uſes λευσσόντων, whereas it ought to be λευσσόντι; but this diſorder is not without its effect, it repreſents the modeſt confuſion with which he addreſſes Nauſicaa; he is ſtruck with a religious awe at the ſight of her, (for ſo σέβας properly ſignifies) and conſequently naturally falls into a confuſion of expreſſion: this is not a negligence, but a beauty. Euſtathius.

℣. 193. *Thus ſeems the palm.*] This alluſion is introduced to image the ſtatelineſs, and exactneſs of ſhape

The pride of Delos. (By the Delian coast
I voyag'd, leader of a warrior host,

in Nausicaa, to the mind of the reader; and so Tully, as Spondanus observes, understands it. Cicero, 1. De Legibus. *Aut quod Homericus Ulysses Deli se proceram et teneram palmam vidisse dixit, hodie monstrant eandem.* Pliny also mentions this palm. lib. 14. c. 44. *Necnon palma Deli ab ejusdem Dei aetate conspicitur:* this story of the palm is this: 'When Latona was in 'travail of Apollo in Delos, the earth that instant pro'duced a large palm, against which she rested in her la'bour.' Homer mentions it in his hymns.

Κεκλιμένη -----
Ἀγχοτάτω φοίνικος.

And also Calimachus.

Λύσατο δὲ ζώνην, ἀπὸ δ' ἐκλίθη ἔμπαλιν ὤμοις
Φοίνικος ποτὶ πρέμνον.

And again,

---- ἐπένευσεν ὁ Δήλιος ἁδύ τι φοίνιξ
Ἐξαπίνης.

This allusion is after the oriental manner. Thus in the Psalms, how frequently are persons compared to cedars! and in the same author, children are resembled to olive branches.

This palm was much celebrated by the antients, the superstition of the age had given it a religious veneration, and even in the times of Tully the natives esteemed it immortal; (for so the abovementioned words imply:) this gives weight and beauty to the address of Ulysses; and it could not but be very acceptable to a young lady, to hear herself compared to the greatest wonder in the creation.

Dionysius Halicarnasseus observes the particular beauty of these two verses.

But ah how chang'd! from thence my ſorrow flows;
O fatal voyage, ſource of all my woes!
Raptur'd I ſtood, and as this hour amaz'd,
With rev'rence at the lofty wonder gaz'd:
Raptur'd I ſtand! for earth ne'er knew to bear
A plant ſo ſtately, or a nymph ſo fair.
Aw'd from acceſs, I lift my ſuppliant hands;
For miſery, oh queen, before thee ſtands!

Δήλῳ δήποτε τοῖον Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βωμῷ,
Φοίνικος νέον ἔρνος ἀνερχόμενον ἐνόησα.

When Homer, ſays he, would paint an elegance of beauty, or repreſent any agreeable object, he makes uſe of the ſmootheſt vowels and moſt flowing ſemivowels, as in the lines laſt recited: he rejects harſh ſounds, and a colliſion of rough words; but the lines flow along with a ſmooth harmony of letters and ſyllables, without any offence to the ear by aſperity of ſound.

ỳ. 198. *O fatal voyage, ſource of all my woes.*] There is ſome obſcurity in this paſſage: Ulyſſes ſpeaks in general, and does not ſpecify what voyage he means. It may therefore be aſked how is it to be underſtood? Euſtathius anſwers, that the voyage of the Greeks to the Trojan expedition is intended by the poet; for Lycophron writes, that the Greeks failed by Delos in their paſſage to Troy.

Homer paſſes over the voyage in this tranſient manner without a further explanation: Ulyſſes had no leiſure to enlarge upon that ſtory, but reſerves it more advantageouſly for a future diſcovery before Alcinous and the Phaeacian rulers. By this conduct he avoids a repetition, which muſt have been tedious to the reader, who would have found little appetite afterwards, if he had already been ſatisfied by a full diſcovery made to Nauſicaa. The obſcurity therefore ariſes from choice, not want of judgment.

Twice ten tempeſtuous nights I roll'd, reſign'd
To roring billows, and the warring wind;
Heav'n bade the deep to ſpare! but heav'n my foe
Spares only to inflict ſome mightier woe?
Inur'd to cares, to death in all its forms,
Outcaſt I rove, familiar with the ſtorms!
Once more I view the face of human kind:
Oh let ſoft pity touch thy gen'rous mind!
Unconſcious of what air I breathe, I ſtand
Naked, defenceleſs on a foreign land.
Propitious to my wants, a veſt ſupply
To guard the wretch from th' inclement ſky:
So may the gods who heav'n and earth controul,
Crown the chaſte wiſhes of thy virtuous ſoul,
On thy ſoft hours their choiceſt bleſſings ſhed,
Bleſt with a huſband be thy bridal bed,
Bleſt be thy huſband with a blooming race,
And laſting union crown your bliſsful days.
The gods, when they ſupremely bleſs, beſtow
Firm union on their favourites below;
Then envy grieves, with inly-pining hate;
The good exult, and heav'n is in our ſtate.

To whom the nymph: O ſtranger, ceaſe thy care.
Wiſe is thy ſoul, but man is born to bear:
Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious ſcales,
And the good ſuffers, while the bad prevails:

ỳ. 229. *Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious ſcales,*
And the good ſuffers, while the bad prevails.]
The morality of this paſſage is excellent, and very well

Bear, with a ſoul reſign'd, the will of Jove ;
Who breathes, muſt mourn : thy woes are from above.
But ſince thou tread'ſt our hoſpitable ſhore,
'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,
To clothe the naked, and thy way to guide——
Know, the Phaeacian tribes this land divide ;

adapted to the preſent occaſion. Ulyſſes had ſaid,

Heav'n bade the deep to ſpare! but heav'n my foe
Spares only to inflict ſome mightier woe.

Nauſicaa makes uſe of this expreſſion to pay her addreſs to Ulyſſes, and at the ſame time teaches, conformably to truth, that the afflicted are not always the objects of divine hate: the gods, adds ſhe, beſtow good and evil indifferently, and therefore we muſt not judge of men from their conditions, for good men are frequently wretched, and bad men happy. Nay, ſometimes affliction diſtinguiſhes a man of goodneſs, when he bears it with a greatneſs of ſpirit. Sophocles puts a very beautiful expreſſion into the mouth of Oedipus, κάλλος κακῶν, the *beauty and ornament of calamities.* Euſtathius.

Longinus is of opinion, that when great poets and writers ſink in their vigour, and cannot reach the pathetic, they deſcend to the moral. Hence he judges the Odyſſey to be the work of Homer's declining years, and gives that as a reaſon of its morality : he ſpeaks not this out of derogation to Homer, for he compares him to the ſun, which, though it has not the ſame warmth as when in the meridian, is always of the ſame brightneſs: this is no diſhonour to the Odyſſey; the moſt uſeful, if not the moſt beautiful circumſtance is allowed it, I mean inſtruction : In the Odyſſey Homer appears to be the better man, in the Iliad the better poet.

From great Alcinous' royal loins I ſpring,
A happy nation, and an happy king.
 Then to her maids—Why, why, ye coward train
Theſe fears, this flight? ye fear, and fly in vain.
Dread ye a foe? diſmiſs that idle dread,
'Tis death with hoſtile ſtep theſe ſhores to tread;
Safe in the love of heav'n, an ocean flows
Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;
'Tis ours this ſon of ſorrow to relieve,
Chear the ſad heart, nor let affliction grieve.
By Jove the ſtranger and the poor are ſent,
And what to thoſe we give, to Jove is lent.

℣. 242. *'Tis death with hoſtile ſtep theſe ſhores to tread.*] This I take to be the meaning of the word διερὸς, which Euſtathius explains by *ζῶν καὶ ἐῤῥωμένος, vivus et valens*; or, *he ſhall not be long-lived.* But it may be aſked, how this character of valour in deſtroying their enemies, can agree with the Phaeacians, an effeminate, unwar-like nation? Euſtathius anſwers, that the protection of the gods is the beſt defence, and upon this Nauſicaa replies. But then it is neceſſary that man ſhould co-operate with the gods; for it is in vain to rely upon the gods for ſafety, if we ourſelves make not uſe of means proper for it: whereas the Phaeacians were a people wholly given up to luxury and pleaſures. The true reaſon then of Nauſicaa's praiſe of the Phaeacians may perhaps be drawn from that honourable partiality, and innate love which every perſon feels for his country. She knew no people greater than the Phaeacians, and having ever lived in full ſecurity from enemies, ſhe concludes, that it is not in the power of enemies to diſturb that ſecurity.

℣. 247. *By Jove the ſtranger and the poor are ſent,*
And what to thoſe we give, to Jove is lent.]

Then food ſupply, and bathe his fainting limbs
Where waving ſhades obſcure the mazy ſtreams.
 Obedient to the call, the chief they guide
To the calm current of the ſecret tide;
Cloſe by the ſtream a royal dreſs they lay,
A veſt and robe, with rich embroid'ry gay:
Then unguents in a vaſe of gold ſupply,
That breath'd a fragrance through the balmy ſky.
 To them the king. No longer I detain
Your friendly care: retire, ye virgin train!
Retire, while from my weary'd limbs I lave
The foul pollution of the briny wave:
Ye gods! ſince this worn frame refection knew,
What ſcenes have I ſurvey'd of dreadful view?
But, nymphs, recede! ſage chaſtity denies
To raiſe the bluſh, or pain the modeſt eyes.

This is a very remarkable paſſage, full of ſuch a pious generoſity as the wiſeſt teach, and the beſt practiſe. I am ſenſible it may be underſtood two ways; and in both, it bears an excellent inſtruction. The words are, *the poor and ſtranger are from Jove, and a ſmall gift is acceptable to them*, or *acceptable to Jupiter*, Διὶ φίλη. I have choſen the latter, in conformity to the eaſtern way of thinking: *He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord*, as it is expreſſed in the Proverbs.

℣. 263. *But, nymphs, recede!* etc.] This place ſeems contradictory to the practice of antiquity, and other paſſages in the Odyſſey: nothing is more frequent than for heroes to make uſe of the miniſtry of damſels in bathing, as appears from Polycaſte and Telemachus, etc. Whence is it then that Ulyſſes commands the attendants of Nauſicaa to withdraw while he bathes?

The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide
Active he bounds; the flaſhing waves divide:
O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuſe,
And from his locks compreſs the weedy ooze;
The balmy oil, a fragrant ſhow'r, he ſheds,
Then dreſt in pomp magnificently treads.

Spondanus is of opinion, that the poet intended to condemn an indecent cuſtom of thoſe ages ſolemnly by the mouth of ſo wiſe a perſon as Ulyſſes: but there is no other inſtance in all his works to confirm that conjecture. I am at a loſs to give a better reaſon, unleſs the difference of the places might make an alteration in the action. It is poſſible that in baths prepared for public uſe, there might be ſome convenience to defend the perſon who bathed in ſome degree from obſervation, which might be wanting in an open river, ſo that the action might be more indecent in the one inſtance than in the other, and conſequently occaſion theſe words of Ulyſſes: but this is a conjecture, and ſubmitted as ſuch to the reader's better judgment.

℣. 265. ——— *At once into the tide*
Active he bounds.]
It may be aſked why Ulyſſes prefers the river-waters in waſhing, to the waters of the ſea, in the Odyſſey; whereas in the tenth book of the Iliad, after the death of Dolon, Diomed and Ulyſſes prefer the ſea-waters to thoſe of the river? There is a different reaſon for this different regimen: in the Iliad, Ulyſſes was fatigued, and ſweated with the labours of the night, and in ſuch a caſe the ſea-waters, being more rough, are more purifying and corroborating: but here Ulyſſes comes from the ſea, and (as Plutarch in his Sympoſiacs obſerves upon *this* paſſage,) the more ſubtle and light particles exhale by the heat of the ſun, but the rough and the ſaline ſtick to the body, till waſhed away by freſh waters.

The warrior goddeſs gives his frame to ſhine
With majeſty enlarg'd, and air divine;

℣. 271. *The warrior goddeſs gives his frame to ſhine.*] Poetry delights in the marvellous, and ennobles the moſt ordinary ſubjects by dreſſing them with poetical ornaments, and giving them an adventitious dignity. The foundation of this fiction, of Ulyſſes receiving beauty from Pallas, is only this: the ſhipwreck and ſufferings of Ulyſſes had changed his face and features, and his long faſting given him a pale and ſorrowful aſpect; but being bathed, perfumed, and dreſſed in robes, he appears another man, full of life and beauty. This ſudden change gave Homer the hint to improve it into a miracle; and he aſcribes it to Minerva, to give a dignity to his poetry. He further embelliſhes the deſcription by a very happy compariſon. Virgil has imitated it.

Os humeroſque Deo ſimilis; namque ipſa decoram
Caeſariem nato genetrix, lumenque juventae
Purpureum, et laetos oculis afflarat honores.
Quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo
Argentum Pariuſve lapis circumdatur auro.

Scaliger, in the fifth book of his Poetics, prefers Virgil before Homer; and perhaps his opinion is juſt: *manus*, he ſays, is more elegant than *vir;* and *addunt ebori decus*, than χαρίεντα δὲ ἔργα τελείει. *Os humeroſque Deo ſimilis*, carries a nobler idea than Homer's μείζονα καὶ πάσσονα; and above all,

——— *Lumenque juventae*
Purpureum, et laetos oculis afflarat honores.

Inexpreſſibly beautiful.

It is ſaid that this image is made by the aſſiſtance of Vulcan and Minerva: why by two deities? Euſtathius anſwers, the firſt rudiments and formation of it in the fire is proper to Vulcan, and Minerva is the preſident

Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks deſcend in wavy curls.
As by ſome artiſt to whom Vulcan gives
His ſkill divine, a breathing ſtatue lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wond'rous mold,
And o'er the ſilver pours the fuſile gold.
So Pallas his heroic frame improves
With heavenly bloom, and like a God he moves.
A fragrance breathes around: majeſtic grace
Attends his ſteps: th' aſtoniſh'd virgins gaze.
Soft he reclines along the murm'ring ſeas,
Inhaling freſhneſs from the fanning breeze.

The wond'ring nymph his glorious port ſurvey'd,
And to her damſels, with amazement, ſaid.

Not without care divine the ſtranger treads
This land of joy: his ſteps ſome godhead leads:
Would Jove deſtroy him, ſure he had been driv'n
Far from this realm, the fav'rite iſle of heav'n.
Late a ſad ſpectacle of woe, he trod
The deſert ſands, and now he looks a god.

of arts; Minerva gives the artificer wiſdom in deſigning, and Vulcan ſkill in labouring and finiſhing the work.

ỳ. 283. *He reclines along the murm'ring ſeas.*] This little circumſtance, Euſtathius obſerves, is not without its effect; the poet withdraws Ulyſſes, to give Nauſicaa an opportunity to ſpeak freely in his praiſe without a breach of modeſty: ſhe ſpeaks apart to her damſels, and, by this conduct, Ulyſſes neither hears his own commendation, which is a pain to all worthy ſpirits, nor does Nauſicaa betray an indecent ſenſibility, becauſe ſhe ſpeaks only to her own ſex and attendants.

Oh heav'n! in my connubial hour decree
This man my ſpouſe, or ſuch a ſpouſe as he!
But haſte, the viands, and the bowl provide----
The maids the viand, and the bowl ſupply'd:
Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
And with the gen'rous vintage thirſt aſſwag'd.
  Now on return her care Nauſicaa bends,
The robes reſumes, the glittering car aſcends,

ỿ. 293. *Oh heav'n! in my connubial hour decree*
This man my ſpouſe, or ſuch a ſpouſe as he!] This paſſage has been cenſured as an outrage againſt modeſty and credibility: is it probable that a young princeſs ſhould fall in love with a ſtranger at the firſt ſight? and if ſhe really falls in love, is it not an indecent paſſion? I will lay before the reader the obſervations of Plutarch upon it. 'If Nauſicaa, upon caſting her 'eyes upon this ſtranger, and feeling ſuch a paſſion for 'him as Calypſo felt, talks thus out of wantonneſs, her 'conduct is blameable: but if perceiving his wiſdom 'by his prudent addreſs, ſhe wiſhes for ſuch an huſ'band, rather than a perſon of her own country, who 'had no better qualifications than ſinging, dancing, 'and dreſſing, ſhe is to be commended.' This diſcovers no weakneſs, but prudence, and a true judgment. She deſerves to be imitated by the fair ſex, who ought to prefer a good underſtanding, before a fine coat, and a man of worth, before a good dancer.

Beſides, it may be offered in vindication of Nauſicaa, that ſhe had in the morning been aſſured by a viſion from [illegible]en, that her nuptials were at hand; this might in[illegible] her to believe that Ulyſſes was the perſon intended [illegible]y the viſion for her huſband: and his good ſenſe and prudent behaviour, as Dacier obſerves, might make her wiſh it, without any imputation of immodeſty.

Far blooming o'er the field: and as ſhe preſs'd
The ſplendid ſeat, the liſt'ning chief addreſs'd.
Stranger, ariſe! the ſun rolls down the day,
Lo, to the palace I direct thy way:
Where in high ſtate the nobles of the land
Attend my royal Sire, a radiant band.
But hear, though wiſdom in thy ſoul preſides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and ev'ry action guides;
Advance at diſtance, while I paſs the plain
Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain:
Alone I re-aſcend —— With airy mounds
A ſtrength of wall the guarded city bounds:
The jutting land two ample bays divides:
Full through the narrow mouths deſcend the tides:
The ſpacious baſons arching rocks encloſe,
A ſure defence from every ſtorm that blows.
Cloſe to the bay great Neptune's fane adjoins;
And near, a forum flank'd with marble ſhines,
Where the bold youth, the num'rous fleets to ſtore,
Shape the broad ſail, or ſmoothe the taper oar;

℣. 313. *The jutting land two ample bays divides,*
Full thro' the narrow mouths deſcend the tides.] This paſſage is not without its difficulty: but the ſcholiaſt upon Dionyſius Periegetes gives us a full explication of it. Δυὸ λιμένας ἔχει ἡ φαιακὶς, τὸν μὲν Ἀλκινόου, τὸν δὲ Ὕλλου, διὸ φησὶ Καλλίμαχος ἀμφίδυμος φαίαξ· The iſland of Phaeacia has two ports, the one called the port of Alcinous, the other of Hyllus; thus Callimachus calls it the place of two ports. And Apollonius, for the ſame reaſon, calls it ἀμφιλαφὴς, or the place which is entered by two ports. Dacier.

For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
But the tall mast above the vessel rear,
Or teach the fluttering sail to float in air;
They rush into the deep with eager joy,
Climb the steep surge, and through the tempest fly;

℣. 325. *They rush into the deep with eager joy.*] It is very judicious in the poet to let us thus fully into the character of the Phaeacians, before he comes to show what relation they have to the story of the Odyssey: he describes Alcinous and the people of better rank, as persons of great hospitality and humanity; this gives an air of probability to the free and benevolent reception which Ulysses found: he describes the vulgar as excellent navigators; and he does this not only because they are islanders; but, as Eustathius observes, to prepare the way for the return of Ulysses, who was to be restored by their conduct to his country, even against the inclination of Neptune, the God of the ocean. But it may be asked, is not Homer inconsistent with himself, when he paints the Phaeacians as men of the utmost humanity, and immediately after calls them a proud unpolished race; and given up to censoriousness? It is easy to reconcile the seeming contradiction, by applying the character of humanity to the higher rank of the nation, and the other to the vulgar and the mariners. I believe the same character holds good to this day amongst any people who are much addicted to sea-affairs; they contract a roughness, by being secluded from the more general converse of mankind, and consequently are strangers to that affability, which is the effect of a more enlarged conversation. But what is it that inclines the Phaeacians to be censorious? It is to be remembered, that they are every where described as a people abandoned to idleness; to idleness, therefore, that part of their character is to be imputed. When the thoughts are not

A proud, unpoliſh'd race —— To me belongs
The care to ſhun the blaſt of ſland'rous tongues;
Leſt malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
Thus with vile cenſure taint my ſpotleſs name.
'What ſtranger this, whom thus Nauſicaa leads?
'Heav'ns! with what graceful majeſty he treads!
'Perhaps a native of ſome diſtant ſhore,
'The future conſort of her bridal hour;
'Or rather, ſome deſcendant of the ſkies;
'Won by her pray'r, th' aerial bridegroom flies.

employed upon things, it is uſual to turn them upon perſons: a good man has not the inclination, an induſtrious man not the leiſure, to be cenſorious, ſo that cenſure is the property of idleneſs. This I take to be the moral, intended to be drawn from the character of the Phaeacians.

ỳ. 331. *What ſtranger this, whom thus Nauſicaa leads?*] This is an inſtance of the great art of Homer, in ſaying every thing properly. Nauſicaa had conceived a great eſteem for Ulyſſes, and ſhe had an inclination to let him know it; but modeſty forbad her to reveal it openly: how then ſhall Ulyſſes know the value ſhe has for his perſon, conſiſtently with the modeſty of Nauſicaa? Homer, with great addreſs, puts her compliments into the mouth of the Phaeacians, and by this meth
her own ſentiments, as the ſentiments of t
Nauſicaa, as it were, is withdrawn, and
on introduced for a more general praiſe

ỳ. 335. *Or rather ſome deſcendant of the*
thius remarks, that the compliments of N
the compliments made to her by Ulyſſes:
her to Diana, ſhe him to the gods. But it
are not both theſe extravagancies? and is
all credibility that Nauſicaa ſhould be thou
or Ulyſſes a god? In theſe ages it would
travagant, but it is to be remembered tha

'Heav'n on that hour its choiceſt influence ſhed,
'That gave a foreign ſpouſe to crown her bed!
'All, all the god-like worthies that adorn
'This realm, ſhe flies: Phaeacia is her ſcorn.'
And juſt the blame: for female innocence
Not only flies the guilt, but ſhuns th' offence:
Th' unguarded virgin as unchaſte I blame,
And the leaſt freedom with the ſex is ſhame,
'Till our conſenting ſires a ſpouſe provide,
And public nuptials juſtify the bride.

Homer every grove, river, fountain, and oak-tree, were thought to have their peculiar deities; this makes ſuch relations as theſe more reconcilable, if not to truth, at leaſt to the opinions of antiquity, which is ſufficient for poetry.

ŷ. 344. —*The leaſt freedom with the ſex is ſhame,*
'Till our conſenting ſires a ſpouſe provide.]
This is an admirable picture of antient female life among the orientals; the virgins were very retired, and never appeared amongſt men but upon extraordinary occaſions, and then always in the preſence of the father or mother: but when they were married, ſays Euſtathius, they had more liberty. Thus Helen converſes freely with Telemachus and Piſiſtratus, and Penelope ſometimes with the ſuitors. Nauſicaa delives her judgment ſententiouſly, to give it more weight; what can be more modeſt than theſe exing the cha[illegible]nd yet they have been greatly traduced by nation, and th[illegible], a French critic; he tranſlates the paſſage believe the ſan[illegible], that 'Nauſicaa diſapproves of a virgin's any people w[illegible] man without the permiſſion of her father, contract a ro[illegible]iage;" ἀνδράσι μίσγεσθαι, led him into this general conv[illegible]h is ſometimes uſed in ſuch a ſignification, [illegible]ngers to th[illegible]y means *converſation*: if the word μίσγεσθαι [illegible]ged conv[illegible] than keeping company, it would be more [illegible]aeacians to[illegible] Boileau obſerves upon Longinus, than Perthat they are[illegible]: for it is joined to ἀνδράσι, and then it ed to idleneſſ[illegible]at Nauſicaa diſapproves of a young woman's character is to[illegible]

But would'ſt thou ſoon review thy native plain:
Attend, and ſpeedy thou ſhalt paſs the main:
Nigh where a grove, with verdant poplars crown'd,
To Pallas ſacred, ſhades the holy ground,
We bend our way: a bubling fount diſtills
A lucid lake, and thence deſcends in rills;
Around the grove a mead with lively green
Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous ſcene;

lying with *ſeveral men* before ſhe was married, without the licence of her father. The paſſage, continues Boileau, is full of honour and decency: Nauſicaa has a deſign to introduce Ulyſſes to her father, ſhe tells him ſhe goes before to prepare the way for his reception, but that ſhe muſt not be ſeen to enter the city in his company, for fear of giving offence, which a modeſt woman ought not to give: a virtuous woman is obliged not only to avoid immodeſty, but the appearance of it; and for her part ſhe could not approve of a young woman keeping company with men without the permiſſion of her father or mother, before ſhe was married. Thus the indecency is not in Homer, but the critic: it is indeed in Homer an excellent lecture of modeſty and morality.

ỳ. 347. *But would'ſt thou ſoon review thy native plain?*] Euſtathius and Dacier are both of opinion, that Nauſicaa had conceived a paſſion for Ulyſſes: I think this paſſage is an evidence that ſhe rather admired and eſteemed, than loved him; for it is contrary to the nature of the paſſion to give directions for the departure of the perſon beloved, but rather to invent excuſes to prolong his ſtay. It is true, Nauſicaa had wiſhed, in the foregoing parts of this book, that ſhe might have Ulyſſes for her huſband, or ſuch an huſband as Ulyſſes: but this only ſhews that ſhe admired his accompliſhments, nor could [illegible]ed *ſuch a ſpouſe as he*, at all, if her affection had been engaged and fixed upon Ulyſſes only. 'Tis likewiſe takes off the objection of a too great fondneſs in Nauſicaa; for it might have appeared too great a fondneſs to have fallen in love at the firſt with an abſolute ſtranger.

Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours;
And there the garden yields a waſte of flow'rs.
Hence lies the town as far, as to the ear
Floats a ſtrong ſhout along the waves of air.
There wait embowr'd, while I aſcend alone
To great Alcinous on his royal throne.
  Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
And to the lofty palace bend thy way:
The lofty palace overlooks the town,
From ev'ry dome by pomp ſuperior known;
A child may point the way. With earneſt gait
Seek thou the queen along the rooms of ſtate;
Her royal hand a wond'rous work deſigns,
Around, a circle of bright damſels ſhines,
Part twiſt the threads, and part the wool diſpoſe,
While with the purple orb the ſpindle glows.
High on a throne, amid the Scherian pow'rs,
My royal father ſhares the genial hours;
But to the queen thy mournful tale diſcloſe;
With the prevailing eloquence of woes:
So ſhalt thou view with joy thy natal ſhore,
Though mountains riſe between, and oceans roar.
  She added not, but waving as ſhe wheel'd
The ſilver ſcourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:
With ſkill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,
Slow rowls the car before th' attending train.

ỳ. 373. *But to the queen thy mournful tale diſcloſe.*] This little circumſtance, ſeemingly of ſmall importance, not without its beauty. It is natural for a daughter to apply to the mother, rather that the father: women are likewiſe generally of a compaſſionate nature, and therefore the poet firſt intereſts the queen in the cauſe of Ulyſſes. At the ſame time he gives a pattern of conjugal affection, in the union between Arete and Alcinous.

Now whirling down the heav'ns, the golden day
Shot through the western clouds a dewy ray;
The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade
To Pallas thus the pensive hero pray'd.

Daughter of Jove! whose arms in thunder wield
Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield;
Forsook by thee, in vain I sought thy aid,
When booming billows clos'd above my head:
Attend, unconquer'd maid! accord my vows,
Bid the great hear, and pitying heal my woes.

This heard Minerva, but forbore to fly
(By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky:
Stern god! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
Till great Ulysses hail'd his native land.

v. 391. ——— *But forbore to fly*
(By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky.] We see the antients held a subordination amongst the deities, and though different in inclinations, yet they act in harmony: one god resists not another deity. This is more fully explained, as Eustathius observes, by Euripides, in his Hippolytus; where Diana says, it is not the custom of the gods to resist one the other, when they take vengeance even upon the favourites of other deities. The late tempest that Neptune had raised for the destruction of Ulysses, was an instance of Neptune's implacable anger: this makes Minerva take such measures as to avoid an open opposition, and yet consult the safety of Ulysses: she descends, but it is secretly.

This book takes up part of the night, and the whole thirty-second day; the vision of Nausicaa is related in the preceding night, and Ulysses enters the city a little after the sun sets in the following evening. So that thirty-two days are compleated since the opening of the poem.

This book in general is full of life and variety: [illegible] the subject of it is simple and unadorned, but improved by the poet, and rendered entertaining and noble. The muse of Homer is like his Minerva, with respect to Ulysses, who from an object of commiseration improves his majesty, and gives a grace to every feature.

The End of the First Volume.